



the Circle

FALL 1979

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A Note On Style

The variety of approaches to writing and design in this issue reflects the *Circle's* function as a laboratory publication. Although each piece was reviewed by staff members and representatives of the Editorial Board, the appearance of any article, story, poem, drawing, or photograph does not necessarily indicate unanimous critical approval.

The Circle wishes to thank all the students and faculty members whose help made this issue possible.

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RIGHT UNDER YOUR NOSE

Cocaine Comes To Auburn

By Amy Dawes

Spread out before me is a diverse collection of cocaine paraphernalia that includes colorful boxes, vials, scales, ornate spoons, mirrors, and tubes for snorting the finely chopped white powder. I am standing in front of the "cocaine case" in the Black Doggs head shop in the back of Cheap Thrills record store in downtown Auburn. "Do you sell very much of this stuff?" I ask the woman. "Sure," she says, "cocaine use is very common in Auburn."

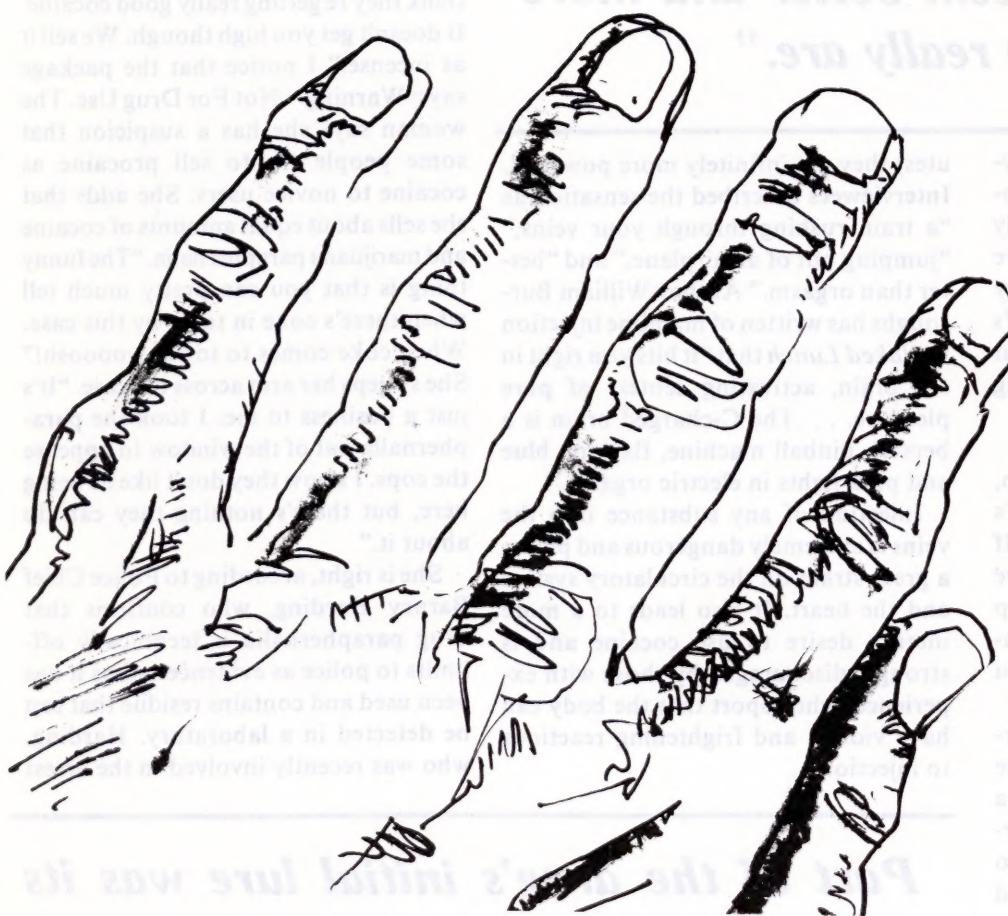
Cocaine, the central-nervous system stimulant derived from the leaves of the coca plant, has been available in Auburn

since approximately 1972, when there was a resurgence in the demand for the drug around the country, but never has it been so readily available and as widely used as it is today. By now all of America is aware of cocaine's popularity among jet-setters, rock stars, and the newly rich, but it is not as well-known that cocaine has actually become the most widely preferred, socially acceptable, and frequently used (after marijuana) illegal drug in this town and in the nation.

Because it is a fact that more people are making recreational drugs a part of

their lifestyle and thus the chances are increasingly good that a member of the University community will find himself in a situation where cocaine is offered to him, the *Circle* has conducted research and interviews in an effort to bring information about the controversial drug to the people, as well as to relate the personal experience and advice of those who have been involved with the drug. In order to protect our sources, the students interviewed will be referred to by pseudonyms.

Cocaine is a "pleasure drug" that is increasingly mentioned in the same sen-



tence as alcohol and marijuana as a "safe" drug because moderate use in a social context does not produce side effects harmful enough to deter the user. The most prohibitive factor in cocaine use is the price. Other than that, the possible deterrents to "social snorting" (analogous to social drinking) are insomnia, weight loss, irritability, the physical exhaustion and depression experienced when "coming down," and damage to the nasal mucous membranes and cartilage.

When snorted, cocaine produces a numbing of the nose and throat fol-

lowed by anything from mild euphoria to a feeling of extreme physical and mental exultation which may last from thirty minutes to an hour, depending on the dose and purity of the cocaine. Students who were interviewed tended to be vague in their description of the drug's pleasure-giving effects, but all were in agreement that it was "fun" and that there was "no other high like it." One woman said it made her feel like "laughing, dancing, and staying up all night," another, "that you can do anything." The most articulate description was received from someone who was

cocaine-intoxicated at the time, and who was exhibiting such symptoms of an over-stimulated central nervous system as grinding his teeth and breathing very rapidly. The subject, Alan, was in infectious high spirits.

"I first used cocaine at a party," he said. "When you go to a party you go looking for a good time, right? Well, when you do cocaine it's usually guaranteed. You don't have to look for a good time, you *are* a good time. You *are* fun, you *are* a party. You walk into a group of people and you're lit up like a neon light. You're so happy you just

effuse happiness, and it makes you fun to be around. I don't need to escape—that's not why I would do a drug—I like to socialize, and cocaine lets me get a huge amount of enjoyment from myself and my friends."

How were Alan's perceptions altered by being under the influence of cocaine?

it is not unknown in Auburn and had been used by two of the students interviewed. The cocaine is reduced to liquid form and injected into the vein with a hypodermic needle. In this method, the drug rushes straight to the pleasure center of the brain, and while its effects are much shorter-lived (less than five min-

Dexedrine which are mixed with cocaine to increase the "lift," and local anesthetics like procaine which have a numbing effect on the face.

"A lot of the blacks come in here wanting the procaine," says the woman at Black Doggs. She pulls a cardboard-encased vial of white powder from under the counter. The package is red and white and it says "Rock Crystal." \$4.95.

"Procaine?" I ask. She nods.

"They mix this stuff with cocaine, and it makes your nose numb. Makes people think they're getting really good cocaine. It doesn't get you high though. We sell it as incense." I notice that the package says: Warning—Not For Drug Use. The woman says she has a suspicion that some people try to sell procaine as cocaine to novice users. She adds that she sells about equal amounts of cocaine and marijuana paraphernalia. "The funny thing is that you can pretty much tell when there's coke in town by this case. When coke comes to town, woooosh!" She sweeps her arm across the case. "It's just a business to me. I took the paraphernalia out of the window to appease the cops. I know they don't like us being here, but there's nothing they can do about it."

She is right, according to Police Chief Barney Harding, who confirms that drug paraphernalia is technically off-limits to police as evidence unless it has been used and contains residue that can be detected in a laboratory. Harding, who was recently involved in the arrest

"If there's anything unreal about it, it's just that things seem better and more exciting than they really are."

"It's not an altered state in the psychedelic sense. With coke, your perceptions are not unreal, just pleasurable heightened to where the world is more stimulating and you have so much energy and you feel so glad to be alive. If there's anything unreal about it, it's just that things seem better and more exciting than they really are."

What about coming down?

"Well, you know it's going to happen, and you want to put it off—and that's where the bad part can come in. If there's any more coke around you're going to snort it, and you can end up spending about \$100, which makes coming to earth even worse, because you end up kicking yourself."

Coming down is the unavoidable aftermath of the cocaine experience. "The higher you go, the lower you go," said a woman interviewed. During the interviews there were frequent references to the "cocaine blues" and the mental and physical fatigue and depression associated with the body's performance after operating in overdrive.

In its physiological effects on the body, cocaine increases the heartbeat, speeds up the breathing, and raises the body temperature. It also works on the cardio-vascular system causing constriction of certain blood vessels. With larger doses, and especially when injected, cocaine can produce headaches, rapid and weak pulse, hyper-ventilation, cold sweat, nausea, tremors, convulsions, unconsciousness, and even death. Injection is a much less common method of cocaine consumption than snorting, but

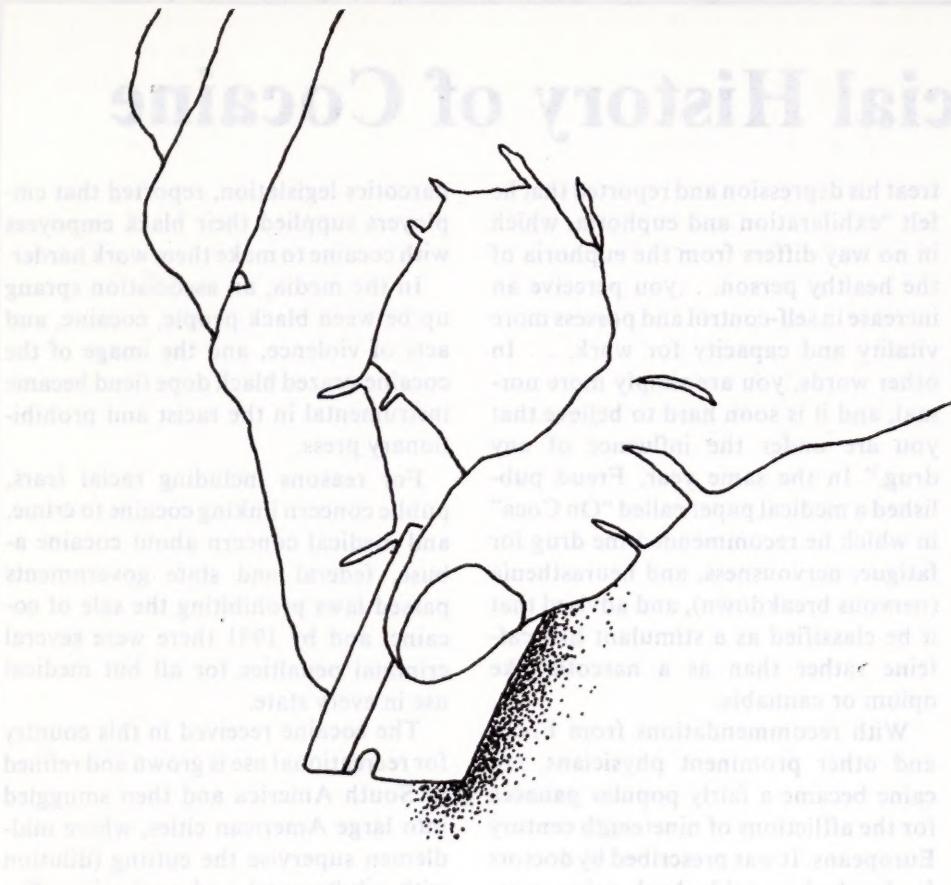
(utes) they are infinitely more powerful. Interviewees described the sensation as "a train rushing through your veins," "jumping out of an airplane," and "better than orgasm." Author William Burroughs has written of mainline injection in *Naked Lunch* that "it hits you right in the brain, activating centers of pure pleasure. . . . The C-charged brain is a berserk pinball machine, flashing blue and pink lights in electric orgasm."

Injection of any substance into the veins is extremely dangerous and places a great strain on the circulatory system and the heart. It also leads to a more intense desire to use cocaine and is strongly discouraged by those with experience, who report that the body can have violent and frightening reactions to injection.

Part of the drug's initial lure was its reputation for enhancing the sex act.

As cocaine changes hands, dealers mix it with other substances to give it more volume and weight and to increase their profits. Some of these substances, called adulterants, are fatal when injected, and some may produce undesirable side effects when snorted. The most commonly used adulterants include a mild baby laxative called mannite, sugar such as lactose and dextrose, a vitamin B compound called inositol, speed hits like Methamphetamine, Benzedrine and

of seventeen Auburn residents on drug charges, eight to ten of them involving cocaine use, says that the drug is used "pretty freely" in Auburn. He has no idea as to what percentage of students may have tried cocaine, and he says that of the arrests he has made on cocaine-related charges since taking office a year and a half ago, all were for dealing and none just for possession, which he says is "no indicator." Harding says he knew the drug was in town when he took



office, but that its availability is higher now than it has been in the past. He says it is in pretty common usage, especially among students, and that next to marijuana it is the most prevalent form of drug use. Harding would not give any information as to where the cocaine in town was coming from, but he was happy to explain the law as it applies to cocaine use.

Cocaine is classified under the Controlled Substance Act along with Quaaludes, marijuana, heroin, morphine, etc. Thus it is still a narcotic under the law. The first offense of possession of under a gram of cocaine is a misdemeanor resulting in a fine and/or imprisonment of under a year. The second offense of the same, or the first offense following conviction for possession of any other controlled substance, including marijuana, is a felony carrying a penalty of two to fifteen years imprisonment. Dealing is a felony on the first offense and is not identified by any specific amount over a gram but by "reason to believe."

"When you go out into the world with your college degree, a felony conviction closes doors," says Chief Harding. "It

can mean the difference between being a pharmacist or veterinarian or being a service station attendant. Between living a life of challenge and excitement and a mere existence. That's why I hate to see these kids doing these things just for thrills, because of what they're doing to their lives."

Harding adds that he is against marijuana legalization because he considers the current situation "positive proof" that the widespread use of that drug has led to the use of cocaine. "The cocaine user of today is the marijuana user of yesteryear," said Harding.

Cocaine users interviewed invariably said that cocaine was not the first drug they had ever used. The general consensus seemed to be not that the use of marijuana compulsively led to the use of cocaine, but that it placed them in a social context where they were more likely to encounter cocaine and made them less resistant to experimenting. Cocaine is usually first encountered in a small gathering in a private home, and reasons for trying to included "I had heard it was safe and a lot of fun," "someone offered it to me and I thought,

why not?," "I had heard good things about it," "a friend of mine told me it was the most pure and natural drug you could do," and "I just wanted to catch a buzz."

For some, part of the drug's initial lure was its reputation for enhancing the sex act. According to one man, "it does increase sexual desires on my part and it seems to enhance sex a lot," but several others were not so sure that the drug was a real aphrodisiac, and one woman said that sex was the furthest thing from her mind when she was cocaine-intoxicated.

Several students reported using cocaine as a study aid because it "keeps you up" and it seems to accelerate mental activity.

The frequency of cocaine use varies: some are heavily drawn to the experience and will do the drug consistently whenever they can afford it; others use it only on infrequent occasions to brighten and evenning or afternoon.

How are college students able to afford cocaine in the first place? For most, the first time is on a friend. After that, the money may come from paychecks, allowance, or any surplus cash available. A gram of cocaine runs in the neighborhood of \$100, but the \$25 quarter-gram is a commonly purchased quantity that is good for about one "party." After that, the regular user is usually someone who sells a little cocaine in order to obtain it. This was the case for Greg, who says he "first got started at Auburn, last year, all because someone offered me a chance to sell it. The people who wanted it came to me, and it was done all in one day. The money got me through the quarter. It could have turned out to be big money if I'd never touched it, but it had a certain mystique about it. . ." (Cocaine users report a common fascination with chopping and cutting the expensive white powder.)

The most common quantity that is dealt in Auburn is a quarter-ounce (7 grams) that is usually obtained for \$500 and can be sold for up to \$700, but most dealers end up consuming the profits, and then some, because "once you start partying on it—watch out. It's depressing coming down, and as soon as you do a line you're going to want another line. You keep trying to reach something,

drawing by Debbie Hartsell

A Brief Social History of Cocaine

Cocaine is extracted from the leaves of a plant called erythroxylum coca, which has been cultivated for thousands of years in the warm valleys of the Andes Mountains in South America. In the thirteenth century, the Incas worshipped the coca plant as divine. Chewing coca leaves has long been a way of life for more than half the rural working population of Bolivia and Peru, who claim that the leaf dulls their hunger pangs and gives them the strength and energy to work in the thin air of the mountain altitudes.

Europeans learned about cocaine shortly after the first voyages to America, when travelers brought back stories of how the natives used it to ward off hunger, fatigue and cold. In the nineteenth century, European medical writers began publishing papers promoting the virtues of cocaine for remedying disorders as diverse as toothache and "timidity in society." In 1880, American doctors reported the treatment of opiate addiction with cocaine, and other doctors advocated use of the drug to increase soldiers' ability to endure fatigue.

At the same time, a Corsican chemist by the name of Angelo Mariani prepared a mixture of coca extract and wine called "Vin Mariani" that became a popular medicinal tonic. The product received enthusiastic endorsements from prominent citizens, among them Pope Leo XIII, the Prince of Wales, Thomas Edison, and Ulysses S. Grant.

Cocaine was extracted from coca leaves in its pure form by Albert Niemann in 1860, and its use in this form spread among physicians, writers, and entertainers. Robert Louis Stevenson was reportedly inspired by cocaine when writing "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." Edgar Allan Poe was supposedly a frequent user, and the physician and writer Sir Arthur Conan Doyle endowed his character Sherlock Holmes with the cocaine habit.

Dr. Sigmund Freud became involved with cocaine in 1884, when he used it to

treat his depression and reported that he felt "exhilaration and euphoria, which in no way differs from the euphoria of the healthy person. . . you perceive an increase in self-control and possess more vitality and capacity for work. . . In other words, you are simply more normal, and it is soon hard to believe that you are under the influence of any drug." In the same year, Freud published a medical paper called "On Coca" in which he recommended the drug for fatigue, nervousness, and neurasthenia (nervous breakdown), and advised that it be classified as a stimulant like caffeine rather than as a narcotic like opium or cannabis.

With recommendations from Freud and other prominent physicians, cocaine became a fairly popular panacea for the afflictions of nineteenth century Europeans. It was prescribed by doctors for headaches, colds, back pains, mental exhaustion, and loss of sexual desire.

In America in 1886 an Atlanta pharmacist marketed a syrup that combined an extract of coca leaves with an extract of kola nut. He called his product Coca-Cola, and it was originally sold as a general stimulant and headache remedy. (When coca became illegal, it was replaced with caffeine in the soft drink.) It is important to distinguish coca from cocaine, which is the active chemical compound of coca and more immediate and powerful in its effects.

Cocaine began to be used in surgery as a topical anesthetic (it still is) and as an aid in withdrawal from morphine addiction. This substitution proved to be dangerous, as cocaine's stimulant powers became recognized as a source of drug dependence.

In the period between the 1900s and the 1920s, cocaine use spread downward in society and became associated in the public mind with criminal classes like pimps, prostitutes, and racketeers. At the same time, Dr. Hamilton Wright, considered the father of American anti-

narcotics legislation, reported that employers supplied their black employees with cocaine to make them work harder.

In the media, an association sprang up between black people, cocaine, and acts of violence, and the image of the cocaine-crazed black dope fiend became instrumental in the racist and prohibitionary press.

For reasons including racial fears, public concern linking cocaine to crime, and medical concern about cocaine abuse, federal and state governments passed laws prohibiting the sale of cocaine, and by 1931 there were several criminal penalties for all but medical use in every state.

The cocaine received in this country for recreational use is grown and refined in South America and then smuggled into large American cities, where middlemen supervise the cutting (dilution with adulterants) and packaging. The illegal cocaine trade continues to snowball in the cities, and the fact that hospitals can obtain the drug for \$32 an ounce while street prices range from \$1,500 to \$2,500 an ounce gives some idea of the profits involved.

While cocaine use is once again most prominent in the entertainment world and in the criminal classes, it is rapidly attaining unofficial respectability in many professional circles of the upper middle classes. Whether this acceptability will be translated into legalization is highly unlikely. Research available on cocaine and its effects is still vague and limited. However, efforts are being made to expose the laws that classify cocaine as a narcotic as irrational and subject to Constitutional challenge. If there should be a relaxation in criminal penalties for importing the drug, and a cheaper and more accessible supply is made available, the country will be certain to see at least a temporary increase in the demand for the drug, especially in a culture where energy, activity, and novelty are as highly emphasized as they are today.

and what you do never seems to satisfy it."

Although cocaine is not a physically

Several students reported using cocaine as a study aid; it seems to accelerate mental activity.

addicting drug in the sense that heroin and morphine are, and discontinuing its use is mainly a matter of making the decision and sticking to it, the psychological addiction to the drug can be a powerful force for some people and may lead to abuse of the drug to the point that it interferes with their health, economic situation, or social adjustment.

"I wouldn't recommend cocaine use to anyone," said Greg, who was once heavily involved with the drug. "It is more dangerous than marijuana because you get very drawn into it. It's a real mental trip, and even if you don't spend that much time actually high on the drug, it becomes the center of your life and you never get anything else done. When you get involved with coke, other things don't matter anymore—school-work especially. The money? It always blew my mind how much money was spent on cocaine, but at the time your values are rearranged, and you think in different terms." One woman who was interviewed reported practically giving away her stereo system and record collection so that she could buy cocaine, and those interviewed who had been heavily involved with the drug spoke of the experience with discomfort and hesitation, as though it were unpleasant to remember. "I think all the time I spent high on coke was time wasted," said Greg. "I know now that it's not a good thing."

All of those interviewed reported that cocaine use was socially acceptable among their peers, but said that it was not necessarily a source of prestige.

"You just don't go around talking about it," says Debra. "You don't want people pointing you out as someone who does cocaine," said Greg. Why is it, then, that bands who play Eric Clapton's "Cocaine" invariably draw roars of approval from the crowds in clubs and concert halls? "It's one thing to admit it in a crowd," said Debra, "but another to people you sit in class with."

Discretion is a major part of the game, and students felt that if one was careful and discreet, the chances of getting busted in Auburn simply for possession were slim. (None of them were exactly aware of how the law treated possession, nor were they particularly well informed about the chemical effects of cocaine on the body. Overdose was of little concern to the users, although cocaine-related deaths have been known to occur.)

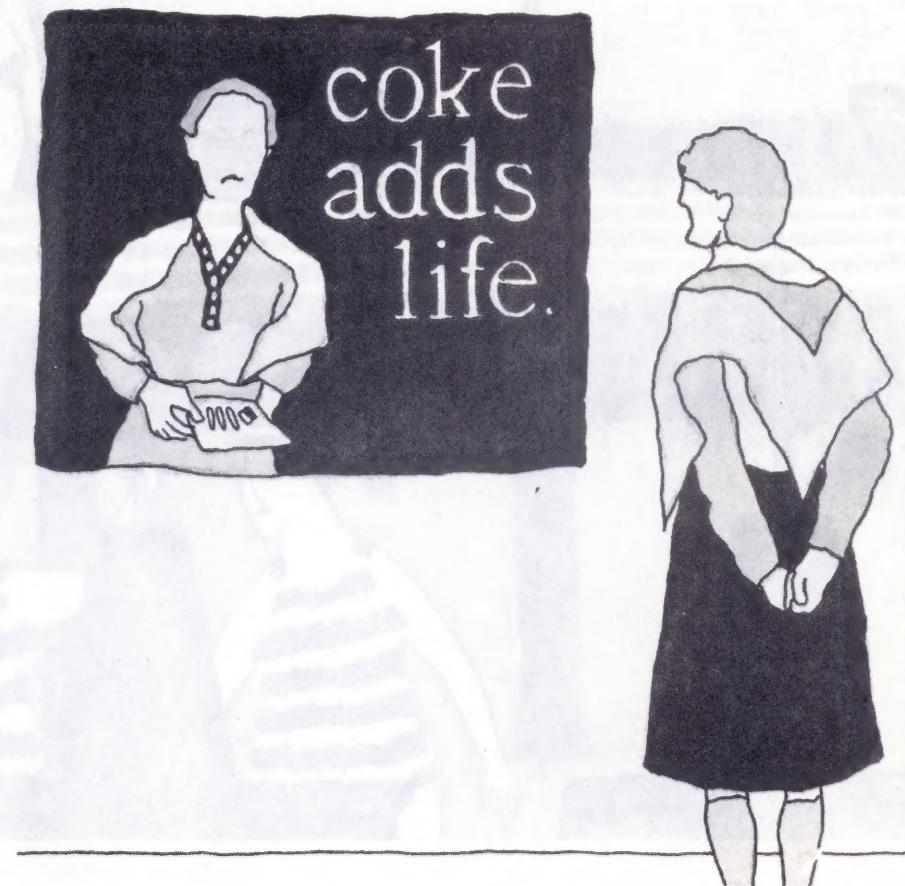
Cocaine use is glorified in rock music, and is closely associated with musicians and entertainers who often serve as cultural beacons for the college student, but this has had surprisingly little to do with the drug's attraction, according to those interviewed. It was the experience itself, and not the aura surrounding it,

that made cocaine users out of them. However, one woman speculated that "people who are heavily into Studio 54 and disco might do the drug just to be glamorous."

Why is it that cocaine use, which was practically unheard-of in the Sixties, has become so popular in the late Seventies?

Use of a specific drug usually takes root in a fringe subculture of society and then proceeds to integrate itself into the larger body. It was the disco subculture that emerged and practically engulfed America over the past five years, bringing to popular culture a sudden shift from the mellow to the upbeat, with an emphasis on high energy, glamour, sex, the exotic, and the trappings of affluence. In accordance, cocaine is a high-energy drug and a very expensive pleasure.

College students have always been a subculture in themselves, however, and the consensus among those interviewed is that cocaine is simply a drug that is being "rediscovered." As several of them put it, "there's always going to be something.



drawing by Debbie Hartsell



lithograph by Elaine S. Dellinger

SONG FOR CAROLE

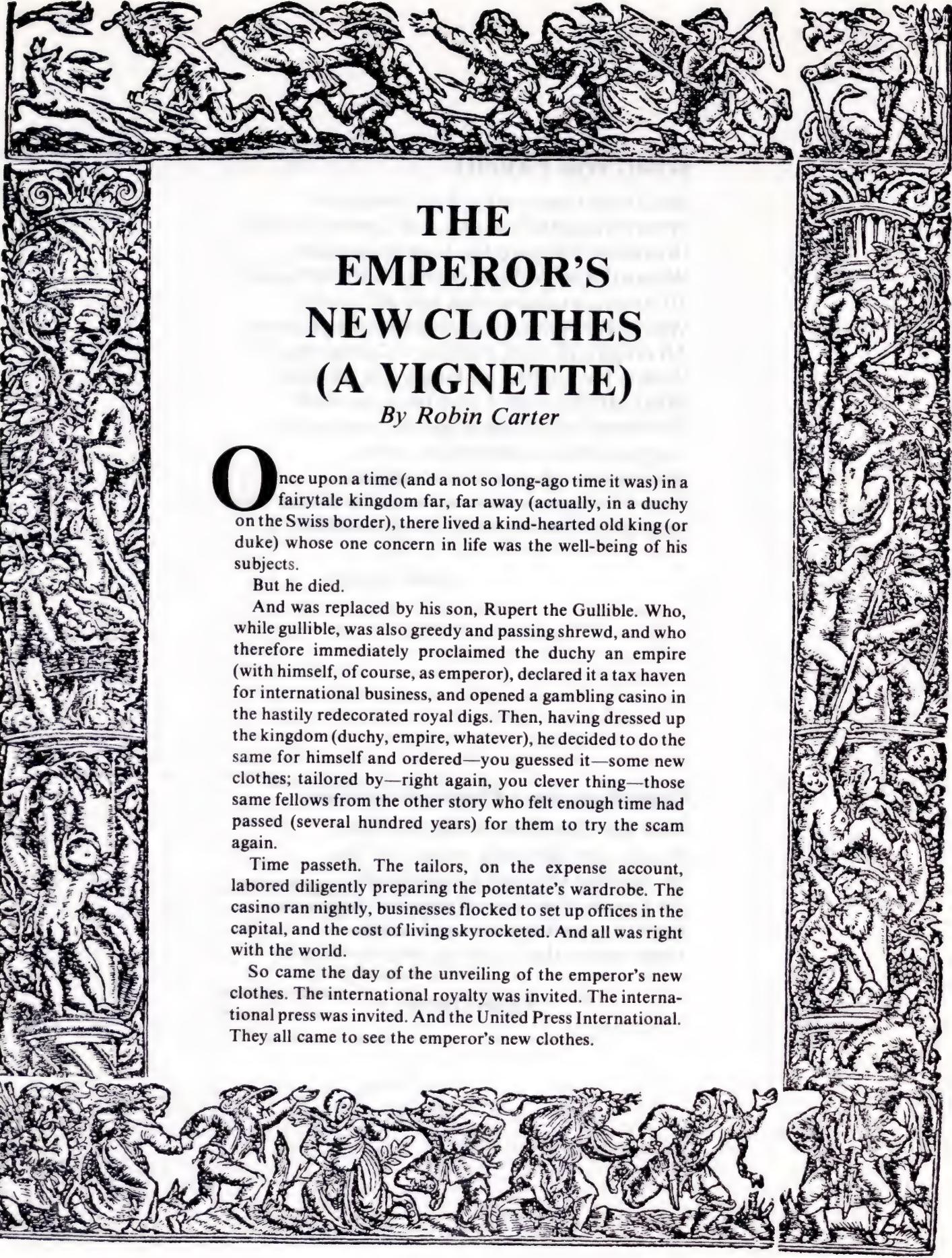
Returning from the land of three parts
Where Visigoths roamed and Caesar first sank
His sword and gave Gaul a glorious start,
Where the Seine flows sweetly by the left bank;
To American grapes that lack all finesse
Where Bartram explored and Carnegie built
An empire of steel, stone and Dungeness,
Where Tombigbee no longer fills with silt
What can this rude home have to offer?
The scene and scenery are not spectacular
Everyone tries to fast fill his coffer,
Love is the only part that is singular,
Please be happy when you resolve your motion:
Your joy is the source of all my emotion.

—Isaac Joyner

Questions for a Classical Guitarist

How can hands and wood and wire
Be rain and lightning, water and fire
Or sun that through a curtain falls,
Or dreams that through the darkness call
How the sparkle, wind and whirl;
From where this laughing blue-eyed girl?

—Robert Boliek, Jr.



THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES (A VIGNETTE)

By Robin Carter

Once upon a time (and a not so long-ago time it was) in a fairytale kingdom far, far away (actually, in a duchy on the Swiss border), there lived a kind-hearted old king (or duke) whose one concern in life was the well-being of his subjects.

But he died.

And was replaced by his son, Rupert the Gullible. Who, while gullible, was also greedy and passing shrewd, and who therefore immediately proclaimed the duchy an empire (with himself, of course, as emperor), declared it a tax haven for international business, and opened a gambling casino in the hastily redecorated royal digs. Then, having dressed up the kingdom (duchy, empire, whatever), he decided to do the same for himself and ordered—you guessed it—some new clothes; tailored by—right again, you clever thing—those same fellows from the other story who felt enough time had passed (several hundred years) for them to try the scam again.

Time passeth. The tailors, on the expense account, labored diligently preparing the potentate's wardrobe. The casino ran nightly, businesses flocked to set up offices in the capital, and the cost of living skyrocketed. And all was right with the world.

So came the day of the unveiling of the emperor's new clothes. The international royalty was invited. The international press was invited. And the United Press International. They all came to see the emperor's new clothes.

Cue the trumpets. At the fanfare, emperor and entourage (the tailors, nominated and seconded by the palace guard) issued forth, to a hushed and expectant crowd (the emperor, of course, was buck naked. But if you have to be told that, why have you read this far?). They commenced their progress toward the reviewing stand; the emperor serene, the tailors sweating (although the day was mild). Not a giggle rose high enough to be suppressed, for all present were familiar with the story (it was a highly literate land) and the press had been forewarned.

Until midway. At which point a child turned to its mother and said, in a voice of irresistible purity and innocence, "Momma, the duke (king, emperor, whatever) has no . . ." The rest was lost amid the thudding of boots and rifle butts as the imperial guard and the child's mother clubbed the little tyke senseless; then grinned nervously at their frowning pasha and the tailors, who wiped their brows and walked on.

Which might have been the end of it, had not the emperor been a rather handsome physical specimen. As he approached the base of the reviewing stand an unidentified female voice (later discovered to be that of the Reuters correspondent) was heard to sound an appreciative "Hmm . . ."; whereupon the more highstrung of the tailors fell to his knees, his nerves

gone, and began screaming that it wasn't his idea, he knew they couldn't get away with it, and things of that sort. Matters weren't helped by his companion's stern "Oh, shut up and die like a man."

The king (duke, etc.) shrugged and turned to them.

"Well," he smiled wistfully, "we almost got away with it. Take this one away." The screamer was carried off. The other blanched, then set his jaw, braced his shoulders, and all that.

"Oh, relax," snorted the emperor (etc.). He sent someone to find out the phone number of the voice in the gall~ry, then returned. "You know, I admire a fellow with *cojones*."

"I can understand why, your honor."

"Excellency."

"Whatever."

"Anyway . . .," and they turned back toward the palace, (which was making ready to open for the evening), speaking of ships and shoes and cabinet posts, of Reuters' girls and kings (dukes, emperors . . .).

Which only goes to show you, you may not be able to con all of the people all of the time, but if you can impress the boss you're in.



drawing by Lynne Wells



AS THEY LIKE IT —

Life With The Society for Creative Anachronisms

By Patrick Watson



hivalry, the ancient code of knighthood that demands honesty, bravery, and courtesy from its sworn advocates, has returned from the appendices of medieval history texts. It is once again an active credo—and I didn't have to search for it in the lands on the distant horizon of our "flat earth." A small group of nonconformists right here in Auburn hold the refreshing belief that the bygone medieval era of proud lords, heroic knights, simple peasants and delicate ladies still has something to offer.

My introduction to the Society for Creative Anachronisms came about simply enough. I merely appeared at one of their weekly meetings. Frankly, I expected to be repulsed by a group I'd envisioned as a horde of half-crazed escapists merrily slicing at one another with four-foot broadswords in a giant game of dungeons and dragons. A first glance at the group seemed to confirm my fears, since some of those imaginary broadswords materialized—not at all diminished from my most fearsome cerebrations. But my tentative repulsion gave way to fascination ere long, and I found myself accepting an invitation to a Society event—a tournament that weekend.

The Society for Creative Anachronisms, I learned, is a national organization founded in Berkeley, California over fourteen years ago by Paul Anderson and other notable science fiction authors. Unbeknownst to most of the mundane populace, the group's growth has divided the continent into seven feudal kingdoms, each with innumerable baronies, shires, and cantons. The Society's goal is to recreate the Middle Ages as they should have been. Auburn's chapter represents the "Shire of the Eagle" at society events like art fairs, tournaments and wars, and coronations.

The Society's art fairs provide showcases for individual talents and crafts as creative today as they were five centuries ago, including leather craft, metalworking, calligraphy, costuming, wine and beer production, armoring, original and authentic medieval tunesmithing, swordmaking, and jewelry craft.

I was so impressed by the sincerity and interest of the group that I found myself eagerly awaiting the start of the weekend odyssey. I even raided the nether regions of my closet to find some suitably medieval attire, both to invoke the spirit of the outing and to conform among the non-conformists. A few scissor snips transformed an old turtleneck into an archaic peasant's tunic. Hanging chains around the shoulders of last

photographs by Mark Wright



year's judo robe and pinning the sleeves up with cuff links created a regal aura not unlike that surrounding Henry VIII's worst portrait (or a Japanese Hell's Angel). A pair of leather gloves with the fingers cut out gave me a certain medieval machismo. A wide leather belt with a pouch completed my fall wardrobe and gave me a place to put my car keys. I found myself wondering when pockets were invented. At any rate, I felt like a native Camelotian.

When I arrived at Franklin D. Roosevelt State Park in Georgia I shut off the stereo, killed the motor, and hot-footed it into the lodge of the large group campground. I had expected to lose an



hour when I crossed the state line, but it was a little bit disconcerting to find that I'd lost about six hundred years. My Auburn companions were gathered a-

round a table playing chess and backgammon, surrounded by tankards, and caparisoned in what probably passed for Levis in the fifteen hundreds. My eyes wandered around the room and took in all the sights. A fellow in black furs was trying to peddle some gemstone trinkets while another showed off his hand-crafted sword. In the corner two fighters talked about past battles and favorite manuevers while a few girls sighed and listened intently. No doubt about it, H.G. Well's Time Machine couldn't have catapulted me out of the space age quicker than Gretchen the Plymouth did.

Registering was a proud moment for me, since it was the first chance I got to use my newly adopted personae. Each feudal funster has a special name (called a personae) that his Society friends know him by. The personae is not allowed to be the name of a famous historical or fictional character, but historical accuracy may be researched as far as desired. These characters may date from the late Roman era to the 1650's, when the use of gunpowder became common and all the fun and glamour of hand-to-hand combat disappeared in the noise and smoke. These names are used so exclusively that it not uncommon for members to be unaware of their friend's mundane names. Agonies of indecision preceded my quick but confident scribble: "Sven Kloth." After a few hours of friendly conversation, I retired to my cabin.

The morning brought an early resurrection in the form of a herald rousing each cabin with a peremptory bellow, "Mi Lords! Miladies! Breakfast is now being served—Oyez!" I stumbled over to the doorway of our cabin and managed a smile and a "Thank you, Milady!" (I pay no attention to alarm clocks, but an offer of hot food can always propel me from the rack, even at 6:30). The meal consisted of toast, coffee, and a surprisingly good cinnamon porridge.

Soon the camp began to gather around a grassy depression, lugging heavy leather trappings, rattan and duct tape weapons, and steel helmets and armor.

Blankets were spread for the comfort of the ladies and the herald called for the first pair of gladiators to "armor up".

I once again wondered just what I'd gotten myself into, but my fears proved ungrounded. The rules of safety devised for these full-contact mock combats are designed to prevent wear and tear on the human body to the maximum extent possible, and the Fighter's Code is scrupulously obeyed. The armor isn't just for the camera, either. Heavy gauge steel and thick rawhide are designed to shed off the rain of blows that may slip past the plywood shields.

The first pair of gladiators took the field, saluted the populace, bowed to the ladies, and at a cry of "Lay on!" began to circle each other looking for a weakness—an opening in the other's defense. Suddenly, a rattan weapon came down with a thunderous whack on a shield, and the contest started in earnest. High swings, parries; the fighters slashed savagely. The red clad warrior shoved in close, pushing his shield against that of his foe in blue-black and hacked into his thigh. The contest stopped for a moment, while the marshals determined that the blue-black fighter had lost a leg and would have to continue on one knee. The combatants now became doubly cautious, the red warrior circling and leaping, hoping for a death blow. The crippled gladiator kept his shield up and his sword arm back. Suddenly the red warrior lowered his shield, lunged, missed, and tried to recover.

The blue-black swordsman seized the opening, leaned in, and smashed his opponent's helmet twice as he stumbled. The vanquished red soldier jerked upright, spun once and toppled without a word to lie still on the grass.

As he sprang back up the audience burst into spontaneous applause. One girl sighed and exclaimed, "Nobody can die like John does!"

The list continued through the morning, with many more ferocious battles. Different weapons were used, and at one point, the two knights present showed their valor when individually pitted against two foes.

Lunch interrupted the proceedings for more than an hour. I shared a loaf, cheese, and several kinds of fruit with

two comrades, and then I smuggled my radio back to the tournament. After all, it was time for the Tech game, and I had high hopes for Auburn. As I fingered the controls, a lady from Iron Mountain (Birmingham) attracted my attention. "Milord, is that really necessary?" I joined the Society to escape such things for two days out of the week!" (I turned the radio down so low I had to press my ear against it to intercept reports from Atlanta, but even chivalrous War Eagles have limits. I kept those from the Shire of the Eagle well informed of the game's progress, unobtrusively. It was a great morale builder).

The baffle dagger competition began after lunch. A baffle dagger is made of a hollow plastic tube held together with duct tape and a prayer. The combatants wear little armor, so the fight is a test of speed and agility.

Around me, the ladies sewed, sang, ate, gossiped, and cheered their men on with cries of "Kill him for me, honey!" This was not the idle chant of females reverted to simple domesticity. Any man in the group will tell you that the women in the Society do most of the work of running the kingdom. They are the real power behind the throne. In fact, they've proved you needn't be a big tough male to be a fighter. A very shapely and stately lady won second place in the baffle dagger list.

After the final melee, a fast-paced and furious free-for-all, the feudal combatants retired from the field to bathe their wounds and prepare for the feast.

As dark closed over the encampment, the lords and ladies of the Society brought forth their finest attire, replete with jewelry and golden embroidery. Bringing the wine they'd been saving all day they assembled in the lodge and took their places around the long green tables. Music and pleasant conversation flowed almost as freely as the food. Platter after platter of roast pork, chicken, mince pie, rice, and cabbage appeared from the kitchen. I fell to with a will. All the while dinner was going on, musicians and minstrels volunteered their wares and got rave reviews.

Halfway through the meal, my dinner companion pulled my sleeve and whispered in my ear while I leaned close.

"Look at everyone closely. They aren't just playing medieval figures anymore! See? They're all at home with their personas! They believe in it!" She was right. I realized then that I, too, had forgotten that this situation wasn't quite real. And I discovered that I wanted it to last.

After dinner, there was revelry that started with a courting contest. Five bold warriors summoned all the poetry in their souls and wooed a lady with all their powers. . .from a distance of six feet, in order to maintain the concept of

chivalry inviolate. Then there was a short auction and more music and companionship. The party lasted most of the night.

In the morning, it was time to say Auf Wiedorsehen 'til next time. But I know I'll be back. The society members would say it this way: "We only fight the people we like." And it seems to me that they've discovered something admirable in this synthesis of the best of the old and new. They like to think of their world as a haven better than either



Shrugging Atlas

Crumpled paper holds the name
That once was pressed so neatly
'Twas burned into my heart, the same
And treasured oh so sweetly

For then our days were always bright
And laughter never tired
Through her I learned to share delight
And love what I desired

Oh precious paper, tossed away
My memories are beguiling;
For now the name so sweet to say
Has somehow waxed defiling.

—Mike Donahue

22-2011

A deadline looms
Waiting for passage,
As a certain hari-kari.
Deep strikes the knife,
A thick rod of iron
Goring my stomach
As my pen pierces
My soul to fulfill
The promise of twelve.
Deep red blood dyes
My loincloth, and trickles
From my thigh to floor
As my words well forth
Across a yellow legal pad
From a self-inflicted wound,
Bringing me nearer to a
Note of Achievement.
Stifling an instinctive moan,
As the knife, greasy and wet,
Pulls across my bowels
To be tossed away later with
News of My Death and Other Poems
From the bottom of
A city birdcage.

—Isaac Joyner

OLD PHOTOGRAPH (1910)

Everyone is brown,
a wasp nest's honeyless hue.
My grandmother stands, bashful,
with eleven other children,
her mud farmer father—
a natural tobacco stain—
and the mother in an apron.
Her own grandfather's hand
on her shoulder holds his balance.
He lost his leg in a war
where butternut color was more
than the tint of a photograph.
Her blonde hair—white since
I remember—is braided
to her waist. Her hands
are clasped in modesty.
She is twelve years old.
Everyone blinks at the flash.
Almost no eyes can be seen.
The next year she was married.
Her wedding photo's also brown,
unfocused, torn. Then she was thirteen.

—R.T. Smith

A REMINDER

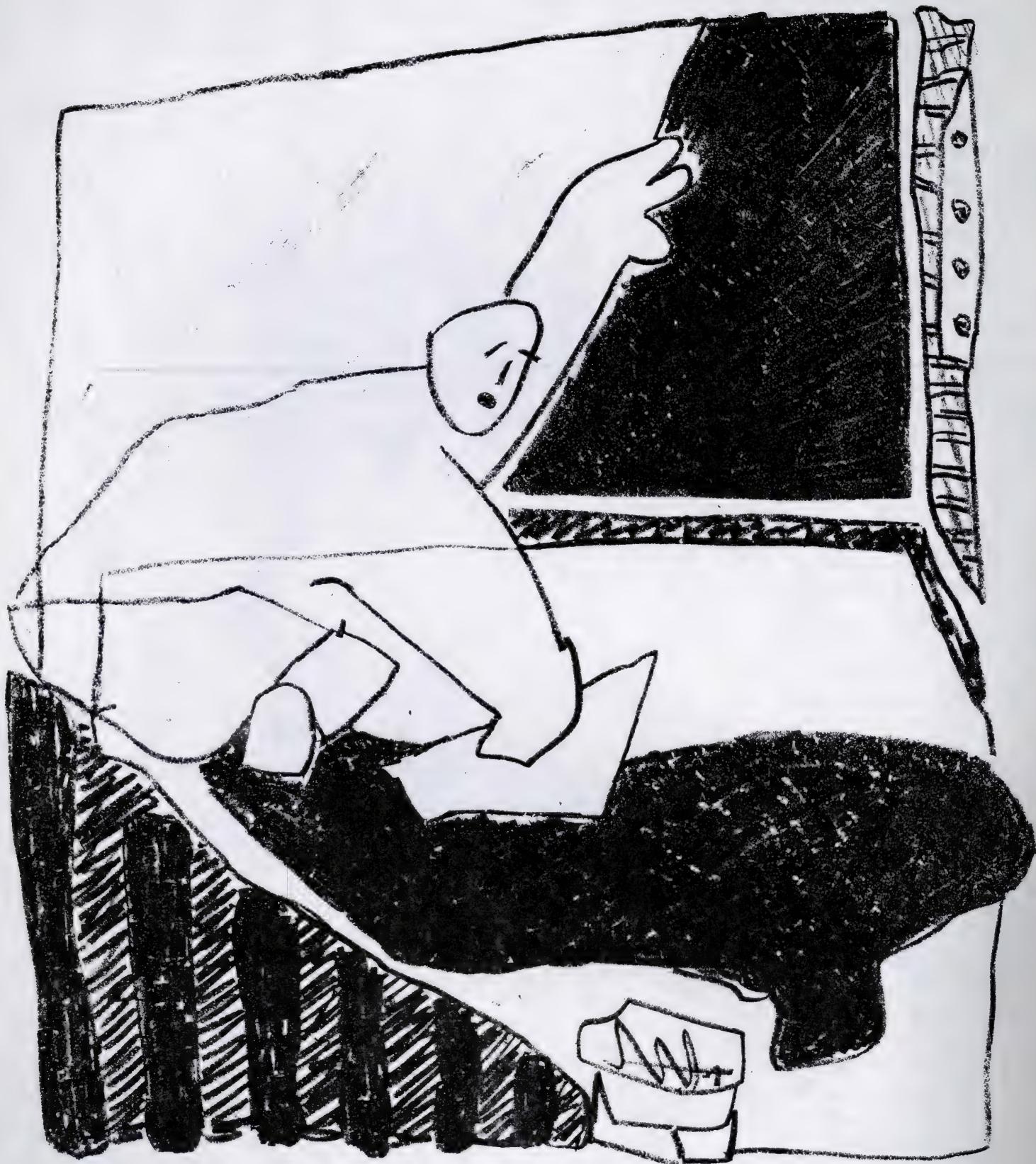
Nothing quite makes my day
like discovering a strand
of her long hair
clinging (lovingly)
to my coat.

—H.M. Golden

Beyond A Priori

The lines of the roof
Run parallel forever
Until, over Euclid's thinning head,
They cross
A thousand times.

—Lisa Peacock



lithograph by Christopher Payne

prelude to vermeer

after dark
the two parts
struggle to be won,
overhead
a silver sickle of moon
slices at the stars.
on the kitchen table
thawing lobsters
begin to wave their claws.

after dark
her faces appear
by candlelight.
despite the wheelchair
a scene prepares itself;
the lighting crew and cameramen
are ready. the arrival
of director jock vermeer
is expected within the hour.

—A.J. Wright

georgia o'keefe paints an alabama landscape

as we collide into each other here
mahler booms against the walls

in the next room
and prophets take their turns at tarot.

like beached moons
cattle skulls rise above the horizons

and a black iris blooms
as i spin across your skin

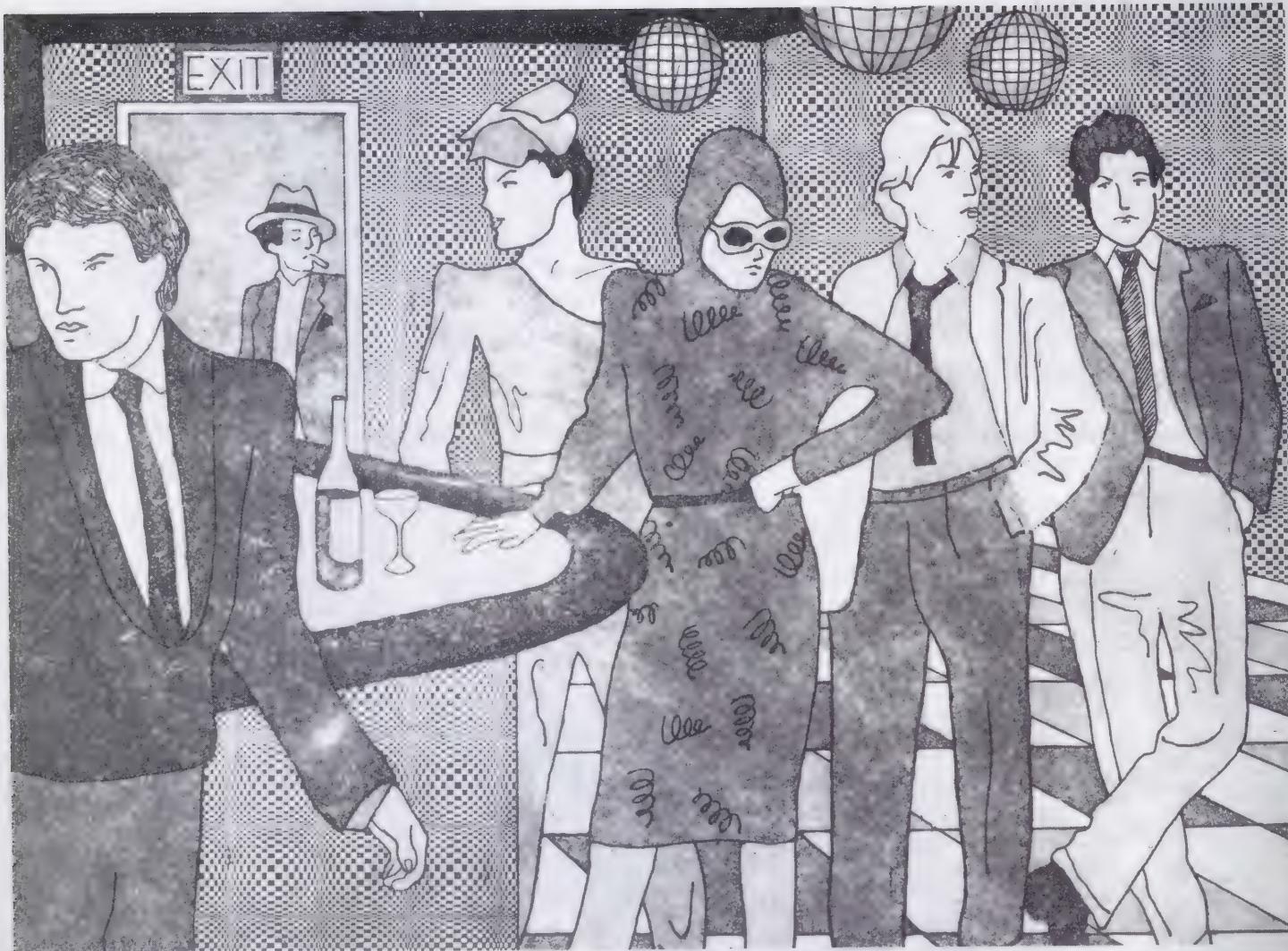
later, in the early morning light
your face hovers
like a mask floating
in a fog of disguises
where the canvas became the frame.

A.J. Wright



lithograph by Brian A. Thompson

GETTING DOWN



by Amy Dawes

It seemed to rain every night last summer. The skies would spend all day sucking moisture from the steaming green earth until, just as the sun began to fade into orange, the clouds would boil black with their load and spit it furiously back onto the earth, replete with thunder and lightning and tree-whipping winds. It was through this brief holocaust that I would drive each evening, guiding my car

up the winding black road to where the disco called the Night Owl perched on its hill overlooking the city of Huntsville.

At seven o'clock each summer evening the Night Owl opened its fetid mouth, still stale-smelling and hung-over from last night's party, and we filed into that dark, red-walled cavity, a battalion of spike-heeled workers tramping across a splotched shag carpet five-hundred yards square. It lolled beneath us like a great diseased tongue, anxious to

etching by Janie Farley

soak up its nightly draught of spilled beer, street dirt and cigarette ash, and across its surface we hustled back and forth to make ready for the night. Chairs and tables were dragged into place, and ashtrays, five hundred of them, were spun onto dull black table-tops. Sound and light systems were checked and re-checked while the popcorn machine spat fragrant yellow kernels against its greasy walls and the kitchen dispatched bar-boys wheeling beer-laden dollies from the freezers and issued forth workers bearing glasses and napkins and matches.

Inside the blue-tiled kitchen, faucets gushed into great steel tubs of frothy yellow collins mix while the girls made pitchers of orange juice or searched through the stacks for the tray with their name etched in ballpoint onto its cork, the tray that they counted on to bring them luck that night.

Of all the waitresses, Anita had been there the longest, and she liked to let the new girls know it. "Seven years!" she would say, "And nobody gonna tell me I'm in their station." Every night she stood at the great wooden table that was bolted to the middle of the kitchen floor, cutting fruit and giving directions. She would line towel-covered trays with rows of sticky orange slice and fill black bowls with lemons and limes and cherries that tumbled like wet red gumballs from slippery gallon jars. She was the oldest among us by years, maybe even forty by some estimates, and she stood six inches below me even in her spike heels. She was Puerto Rican, and she liked me somehow, calling me "sweet" while all the other girls who were not "permanent" were "leettle beetch." Her skin was an olive color, greasy with make-up, and her hair was dyed red and teased into a fright wig. She wore clothes and make-up in garish and exotic combinations, but she had her conscientious moments. Once in front of the mirror she rubbed off some lipstick with a cocktail napkin saying, "Makes me look like whore." She liked the young boys better than any part of her job, and they liked her for the attention she gave them and the way her long nails brushed against the fabric of their shirts.

There were other women who ran the bar: the manager, Vi, a strong-faced woman whose good-humored cussing and ranting provided the backdrop for each night's preparations until the sound system drowned her out, and Astrid, the head bartender, whose rare and natural beauty was a striking incongruity in the red and black world of the disco. When she was over-worked and angry with the pushiness of the customers, her eyes would flash like headlights snapping on; when she was playful and relaxed, the way she smiled was somehow worth more to me than the crumpled pocketfuls of money I carried home each night. She had a twin sister who came in sometimes to drink at the bar, and they were almost identical except that the twin's hair and eyes were wilder and I never saw her without her head thrown back in laughter and a man on either side of her.

Once when I looked up and saw the two together through eyes blurred with smoke and overwork, they seemed to be the same person split into sides of good and evil like two inhabitants of parallel universes momentarily thrown into the same dimension. It was an image that entertained me all summer.

When the night's preparations were done, the waitresses would drift around and sit at the tables to smoke and talk idly, or play pinball or backgammon, or disappear into the bathrooms to preen themselves in front of the long mirrors, and then it always seemed slightly unreal that the great dark empty room would soon transform into the mad disco maelstrom that it became. But unfailingly, when the doors opened at eight o'clock, the procession would begin.

They came in twos at first, pair after pair of them traveling the sloping red walkway from the door to the disco like animals boarding the ark. The real disco dancers came first, strutting across the carpet in a parade of New York fashion, eager to have the dance floor to themselves to perform for each other, spinning out like tops across the surface and coming back together again with the surety of acrobats. Their domain was soon invaded by other, less professional dancers, who came in matched pairs of glow-in-the-dark white pants and bright summer shirts, their tanned arms and

Girls came in exuding clouds of fragrance and ornament to disperse and dot the darkness like beautiful night-blooming flowers, some to fade and wilt unpicked before the night was over.

sun-bleached hair making them look beautifully symmetrical when they fell into the beat and swung their impossibly slim hips in unison as if straddling the same pendulum.

Other groups of single sex came in the front door; girls



who came in exuding clouds of fragrance and ornament, to disperse and dot the darkness like beautiful night-blooming flowers, some to fade and wilt unpicked before the night was over, and packs of boys who glowed with shower and shave, clean shirt and cologne, who approached the bar with cinema swagger and then leaned casually against it with beer in hand, peering wolf-eyed into the darkness. Across the room they saw the polished wood of the dance floor glowing softly while the colored lights and dancer's feet swept across it; they saw the lights of the city sparkling below them through the huge picture windows that lined the far walls, and they saw the girls coyly perched at their tables like so many unexplored possibilities. They felt the increasing beat and volume of the music and the warmth of the liquor inside them making them stronger and bigger than they had been before, and in the jump-to-confusions of their youth, they felt that they were immersed in the best that their lives had to offer them.

And perhaps I would have agreed, if only I had walked into the disco at that moment and stayed just long enough to sip the heady flavor of that brew of human possibilities, but I was fated to stay longer, to drink more deeply, and to uncover the dregs that lie at the bottom of such a brew. Deep in the night I would discover the danger in the disco music, the insidious force that drowns out anything else in a disco, getting louder and louder, getting ever more upbeat while boredom and desperation take hold all around it. Boom, boom, boom; sex, money, and mind-control. It becomes the heartbeat of the scene, the blood rushing to the head, the adrenalin pumping like poison through the veins of the wildly agitating dancers, harder and harder until they mouth the words with glazed eyes, never hearing in the background the continuing melodious rattle and ching of the cash register.

And so there were the high-school girls, who had plotted all week to obtain a fake ID only to end up crying drunkenly in the bathrooms while fat girls who were secretly relieved patted their shoulders, all because they had seen their boyfriends coming in with other ladies. There were young men who launched themselves into violent drunken stupors on the strength of one glossy-lipped rejection, and college boys who would start a gang fight against the only black man in the place for dancing with a white girl. And always there were lonely GI's finding out all about surface values and Iranians and Vietnamese finding out the hard truth about the land of opportunity; finally reduced to begging in their broken English girl after girl for just a dance or a smile. And all the while I felt the overwhelming squalor of the disco music driving everyone into the trap, its lyrics screaming sex, sex, sex, its lyrics knowing nothing of love.

Night after night we waitresses wound our way through the densely packed crowd, our feet aching and our trays sticky with the sloshing of summer drinks, tom collins and margarita and gin and tonic glittering on the cork of cigarette-scarred trays amid napkins and matches and orange rinds and a shotglass full of change. We were tired girls who had heard it all twice and could still laugh together about it, but some nights made me more tired than others

and I could no longer laugh. One night, through the great shifting and pushing crowd, I glimpsed a young boy of fifteen or so, who had somehow slipped past the door, wandering wide-eyed and bewildered through the crowd, and I could see the disbelief on his face grappling with the innocence still in his eyes, and for an instant I felt that he and I were the same person. That morning when I drove home across the empty blue two a.m. highway and climbed the stairs to my bed, I sat upon the covers in my dark room and thought of that boy's face, and the way Astrid smiled, and all the things that swirled chaotically around those two images, and I wondered, just sat up all night and wondered...

NEW YORK: OCTOBER 1979

The pickpockets predict a big day for the police. Spirits of time past hide under the bannister. They will not be stolen. They will come out when we are not ready and most need them. Material goods can only be multiplied so far. Spiritual goods are infinite. The Pope told us this while speaking at the U.N. about other things, these among them. Or was that Spencer Tracy receiving the flowers and kissing the little black girl so kindly? I didn't see the colors. Just black and white. My color set was out. Even so, the material goods kept multiplying. The spiritual. Between the commercials.

—Fred Donovan Hill

The Three Ages of a Cat: A Haiku Trilogy

- I. The tumbling fluff,
eyes full of god's innocence,
attacks his cloth mouse.
- II. Lean lord of shadows,
sniffing lust at the window
moans coarse in the dark.
- III. Fat sage of the fire,
who sits, content in wisdom
seen from half-closed eyes

—Michael Woodhaven



PATTI SMITH GROUP CHRISTMAS

includes "Violent Night"
"Away in a Deranger"
"I Have Not Sold Myself to God"
@1978 messianic music the bowery, new york

LEAVING ON A JET PLANE LYNYRD SKYNYRD

@1977 tailspin records muscle shoals, alabama

A NIGHT AT STUDIO 54

includes the hit "Sniff and Tell"
by Steve Rubell and the Stool Pigeons
@1979 cokespoon records new york, new york

NATIVE NEW YORKER

DAVID BERKOWITZ

includes "Love Gun"
"Victim of Love"
@1977 magnum music new york, new york

WE ARE FAMILY CHUCK MANSON

includes "Home on the Range"
@1969 savior mobile music ranch beverly hills, calif.

BILLBOARD'S BOTTOM 100

By Rob Humphrey and Ron Jewell

After exhausting the pinball machines in our local music store on one typical Friday evening, I decided to further amuse myself by thumbing through the stacks of battered albums in the used records department. In the process I discovered a score of records that had somehow escaped national attention upon release. Were they to be re-released and given the proper amount of publicity, they would surely be reason enough for the establishment of a new record-industry institution: Billboard's Bottom 100—with a bullet. Here is a small sampling:

TED KENNEDY I GOT A NAME

includes "Born to Run"
theme from "Camelot"
"Bridge Over Troubled Waters"
@1979 cover-up records chappaquiddick, mass.

REUNITED HARRY REEMS AND LINDA LOVELACE

@1980 copulike records slippery creek apt. 6 hollywood, calif.

LIFE FOR THE TAKING JOHN WILLIAM GACY

includes "Green Green Grass of Home"
@1978 fertilizer records chicago

CHEESE SANDWICH IN PARADISE JIM JONES AND THE JONESTOWN 914

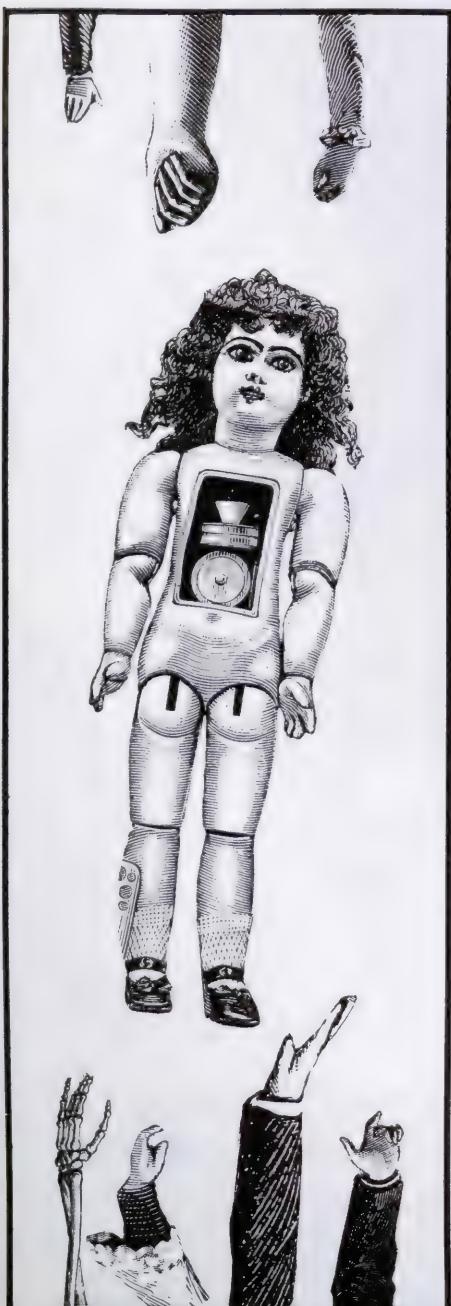
includes "Women and Children First"
@1978 enditol music san francisco/guyana

—GOOD GIRLS DON'T—

STILL NO CAMPUS BIRTH-CONTROL

By Kelly Kohler

Every year, some five hundred Auburn women, many of whom are on their own for the first time, will experience the pain and trauma of an unwanted pregnancy. An overwhelming majority of these women will choose to have abortions, spending \$100,000 a year on the operations, perhaps using



the services of one of the metropolitan abortion clinics that advertise weekly in the *Plainsman*. In spite of these disturbing truths, Auburn University, unlike many other southern institutions of higher learning, provides absolutely no access to the birth control methods which could prevent these unwanted pregnancies and their resulting abortions. Apparently, the administration is reluctant to admit that student sexuality exists, and has chosen to ignore the fact that student pregnancies are a common occurrence. Auburn's women, they seem to say, are "good girls," and "good girls don't."

Such foolish near-sightedness, however, does not solve the problem. The Rev. Rod Sinclair of the Episcopal College Center counsels many women each year with problem pregnancies. He expressed a genuine concern over the university's attitude in the handling of the situation. "Auburn is covering up the problem," he said, "and in a way I don't blame them. Maybe they are fearful of adverse publicity reaching alumni or parents." He went on to say that "I would think that parents would want to send their kids to a university that doesn't stick its head in the sand, but faces life directly. This is a case of timidity, of refusing to face up to what life is about."

Coed pregnancy is not a new problem in Auburn. In 1971 and 1972, when information was not available and abortions were illegal in Alabama, Sinclair worked with an organization called Clergy Consultation Services that dealt with several hundred pregnancies a year. "Ninety-eight percent were decided in favor of abortion; many of these Auburn women would fly to New York and back in one day for the operation. It must have been quite a strain on them."

Auburn, of course, is not alone—coed pregnancy is a nationwide problem. However, while other universities are setting up family planning clinics and dispensing contraceptives and useful information, Auburn is still drag-

ging its feet. Fortunately, other universities have had the wisdom to confront the problem. The University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, for instance, has an extensive birth control program. The department operates like a private office, but at lower prices. All gynecological services are provided except the fitting of IUDs. And while the University of Tennessee has no on-campus pharmacy, a limited number of birth-control devices are kept in stock at the student health center. These devices can be bought by students after a routine examination has been performed by the staff gynecologist. In addition, UT has a program for students who cannot afford to pay for birth control; they are given devices free of charge. A spokesman for the UT health center said the program has been in existence for five years and student response has been "tremendous."

Florida State University also offers a birth control program to its students. The program, which has been in effect for several years, requires students to take a non-credit course in family planning and birth control before contraceptives can be given. A spokesman for the FSU student health center said the program "works excellently" and that anywhere from ten to twelve students are enrolled at any one time.

Perhaps one of the most advanced birth control programs is at Louisiana State University. According to B.N. Addis, their chief of staff, the LSU clinic has offered birth control for several years. He said they recently added a full time gynecologist to the staff in response to student demand. He went on to say that women at LSU asking for birth control are required to have a pap smear test before doctors can prescribe contraceptives, and that staff doctors work closely with women to decide on the type of contraceptive most suited to the student's need. "We don't have the heart-breaking problems with unwanted pregnancies that we did before," says Addis. "I haven't seen one in a year,

when I used to see one every week." Addis quickly added that "We certainly don't promote sexual promiscuity. We go on the assumption that if a young

needs of university women and county women as well. Many students do not even know the clinic exists.

There is no doubt that many more

"Auburn women know how to behave themselves better than that."

lady comes in asking for birth control, then there is a need for it."

At Auburn, Drake Student Health Center would seem to be the logical place for women to turn with problems concerning birth control or pregnancy, but women who come to Drake for birth control advice are referred to the Lee County Family Planning Clinic, because "we simply do not have the facilities at Drake," according to Drake's director, Dr. Judith Hood. This is not to say that Drake has taken no progressive action. Drake does have two gynecologists on its staff and offers a pregnancy test when the staff thinks one is warranted. Also, Drake now offers a birth control counseling program which advises men and women about the various methods of birth control and the effectiveness, advantages, and disadvantages of each, but Drake maintains a hands-off policy about contraceptives: it does not dispense any. "This is because we don't have our own pharmacists on campus," Hood explains, adding "We don't dispense any type of prescription medication at all."

The Lee County Family Planning Clinic, which provides counseling, gynecological exams and contraceptives at a slight charge, is the only affordable answer for many Auburn students, but it offers these services only one day a week, Tuesday, from 8 to 11 a.m. and 1 to 3 p.m., times that are likely to be impossible for students to take advantage of. In addition, the clinic, which is located behind the post office off Gay Street, is a tiny facility with a small staff, and it is shamefully inadequate for the

Auburn students who should be using birth control *would* use it if it were available on campus, and this would drastically reduce the number of unplanned pregnancies and the resulting abortions. This is not merely speculation; it is borne out by the experiences of other universities.

So why does birth control remain unavailable at Auburn? Part of the blame lies with the students, for though they have a certain amount of power in their SGA, they have been unable to be frank enough to make on-campus contraceptives one of their demands, and apparently no SGA President has been willing to step forward on this issue. But perhaps more importantly, the answer lies with the administration, for sex and birth control are touchy subjects with university officials, especially those who have been with the university for a long while. Many are uncomfortable with the wider latitudes that characterize the sexual behavior of our times, and they are also reluctant to admit that unwanted pregnancies are a problem on this campus.

For example, Dean of Student Life Katherine Cater, who was once the dean of women, has been at Auburn a long time. Over the years she has seen many Auburn students come and go, and she has seen many changes occur on Auburn's campus, especially those concerning women. She has seen the transition from women being required to live on campus to women living off-campus; she has seen the dissolution of the dress code and recently, the change in women's visitation rights. Still, Dean Cater

maintains an idealized concept concerning students and sex. She doubts that it is a problem here at Auburn. "It is a problem around the nation, and I feel information and advice should be made available, because the problem does exist," but she intervenes quickly, "It is not a problem on this campus. Auburn women know how to behave themselves better than that." Dean Cater went on to say that she does not feel it is the place of the student health center to dispense contraceptives. "The health center is for ailments. If a woman has a personal problem, counseling is all that is necessary. There are other places students can go for that (contraceptives)."

Notwithstanding Dean Cater's view, many feel the most effective solution to the problem of coed pregnancy should originate from within the university itself.

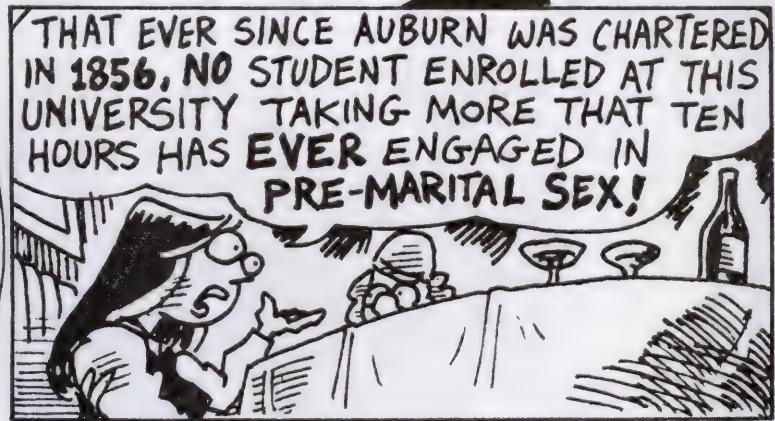
Dr. Hood feels that only straight honest talk, with both men and women facing their own physical and psychological realities, can reduce the number of student pregnancies. "A clinic is the only real way to meet the needs," says Hood. "Then we would have time to deal with each case individually. But a clinic is costly and we could not have it without outside help, which is pretty unlikely considering some of the present attitudes on this campus concerning student sexuality."

Rev. Sinclair feels that the key to improvement lies in "a caring, considerate counseling program on campus. I would like to see Auburn have a course in personal and psychological growth. Often, a student lacks self-confidence," Sinclair explains. "A low self-image often makes us feel that we must become more intimate to be accepted. We need a program in emotional development to help us gain more self-confidence. Such a program could be done with the continual backing of fraternities and sororities and the university."

"This is a natural part of our lives," Sinclair continues. "We need to recognize and deal with it, out of respect for ourselves. We deserve it."



I'M SHOCKED! AFTER
ALL, YOU KNOW ABOUT
THAT GREAT OLD
AUBURN TRADITION!



COLLEGE HOUSING

GOIN' TO THE COUNTRY



College housing can be a dull and depersonalizing experience for the student on a budget, who often finds himself staring at four cinderblock walls in a large complex of identical cells, or existing in a dormitory room in which privacy is scarcer than eight hours sleep. Fortunately, Auburn is full of alternatives, and in the interest of investigating the possibilities, the Circle will make this column a quarterly feature in which to present the homes of students who have found interesting solutions to the problem of how to find a place you can call a home away from home.

photographs by Rob Lotuso

For students with imagination and transportation, the small communities surrounding Auburn boast of housing opportunities that are unique, rich in history, and infused with country charm. A student with the right connections can set himself up in a farmhouse with several other roommates for as little as \$50 a month, and even get a bedroom of his own. For those who have been sheltered from the archaic facilities in many off-campus dwellings, the less than modern plumbing may take some getting used to, but the country air and peace and quiet more than compensate. Country living also offers the student the opportunity to raise pets and to throw large parties without disturbing anyone.

Eric Lester, Andy McUmber, and Oscar Saliba, who are seniors in industrial design and architecture, live in a rambling farmhouse on the far side of Loachapoka. These students have been among the

operators of a bamboo furniture business called Island Designs, and their fine handcrafted furnishings, including mirrors, plant stands, and a dining room set (the dining table has a smoked glass inlay) are only part of the creative flair that they have brought to the house.

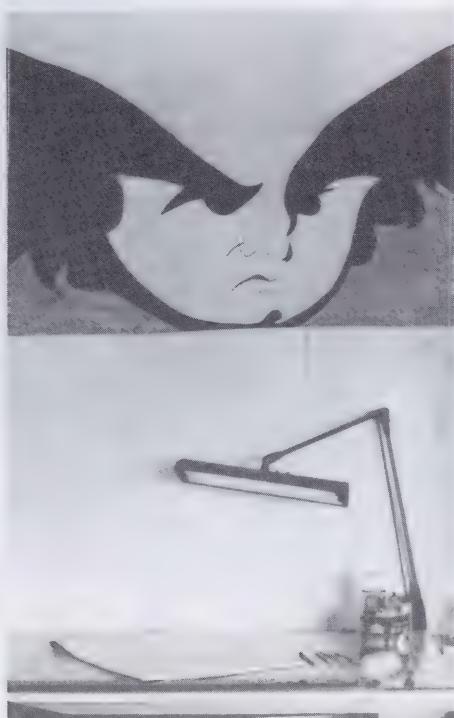
Another room has been devoted entirely to a collection of pseudo-antiques (area artifacts) that have been arranged in corners or nailed to the walls. Eric says they eventually hope to fill the whole room with antiques. Spread out on a coffee-table beneath the window there is another kind of relic—fifteen year old issues of *Life* magazine with amusing or historical covers. A double life-sized ma and pa rag doll reposes in a corner rocking chair, lending a homey atmosphere to the scene.

There are plenty of other creative touches throughout the house to keep the visitor amused, like the debatably artistic

conglomeration of antlers, pop art steering wheel, and plastic Mardi Gras beads that graces the mantle in Oscar's room, or the imposing portrait of the wild-eyed gentleman above Oscar's desk. Visitors are invited to guess the identity of the subject; the only clue Oscar will provide is that the picture is titled "Roll Over."

A broad, white-pillared porch, surrounds the house and looks out on a yard full of century-old trees. Among the buildings on the property is an old smokehouse which is currently being wired for electricity to provide a winter workshop for Island Designs.

Ex-Alabama Supreme Court Judge James E. Livingston would have rolled over in his grave if he could have seen his stately 1913 Notasulga house the night we ventured out to investigate rumors that it was a highly unusual dwelling. The yard was jammed with cars and trucks and the house was spilling over with



party-goers. There were college students guzzling draft beer from fruit jars, hooting and hollering to blue-grass music, and standing around a bonfire in the backyard baying at the moon. Dogs and cats raced around the yard and there was a black goat straining against the chain that bound it to a tree. "What do you keep the goat for?" I asked an inebriated resident of the house. "We're going to eat it." came the reply. It was true; the judge's estate had fallen into the hands of a group of Auburn forestry students, and there was no telling how it would come out of it.

The most striking aspect of the aging house that perches on the fringe of Notasulga is the bigness of it. From outside it looks like a small hotel, and inside there are high ceilings and hallways that measure ten feet across. The front door is wide enough to drive a tractor through.

Last night the entrance hall contained

a scene that might have inspired Van Gogh, with students gathered around the neon green of the pool table in the garish light of a ceiling bulb, but this morning as we return with a loaded camera, the hall is sunny and quiet, and the only noise is the scritch-scratch of a record needle that may have been stuck all night. A striped grey cat is the most lively member of the household this morning; she winds her way between our legs and leads us around as if to show us where the pictures are.

The house looks like an old Southern hotel in a 1930s movie. At the opposite end of the entrance hall is a massive oak staircase with a gracefully curving bannister gummy with dust and old varnish. It leads us upstairs, and there we find another wide hall bordered on both sides with bedroom doors that have tin numerals nailed to them and dusty fogged glass windows above them.

The bedrooms are huge by college liv-

ing standards (20x17) and even the bathroom, with its four legged tub, has its own fireplace.

One of the most unusual features of the house is the second story sunporch that is completely surrounded by twelve sets of tall hinged windows with peeling white paint. Below it is another porch, this one enclosed in ivy-covered screen between brick pillars, and decorated with plants, a porch swing, ivy-covered tree stumps, and an antique iron stove beneath a snake-skin mounted on the roof-support beams.

The house is full of antiques tucked into odd places, and a feeling of old money and grandeur still awes the visitor, while there is an intriguing incongruity between the evidence of once lavish living and the weathered and faded condition of the house today. Undoubtedly, it is an unusual place to live.





drawing by Lynne Wells

A Night

the moon like
a skull's back rolling
through the grave-fog clouds
above the house
of children and
scream and
fire

—Dean Wiseman Golden

Vale, Amor Meus

Brush back your hair, my gentle lady
golden bright as amber-glass
and loosen this, your swan's-down shroud
from shoulders smooth as wave-worn shells
and I shall kiss your eyes asleep,
sad, satin-sheeted wishing wells.

Now hold me softly, cold to warm
and soak in from my shaking shoulders
sad, sweet love—all I possess
and yet enough for what remains
to have you here my final day
to bathe with love my final pains.

—Michael Woodhaven

trees from a fourth story window

what prompted these beasts to sprout here?
they seem to enjoy the clutter
they create—
having no respect for concrete
or the calculated faces
of buildings.

they smirk at “civilization”,
“manifest destiny”—
claiming first squatter's rights
on property they occupy.

what is their purpose here?
a bit of shade
a rodent's home
and seasonal fashion.

why do they root in ground
soon to be sidewalk
or muddle the geometry
with small vain attempts at beauty?

someone should inform them
the style of modern times,

maybe then they'd drop their color
and adapt the gray they border.

—Ken Taylor

For the patron weary of campus cafeterias and bored with the monotonous consistency of the Magnolia Avenue and Gay Street fast food forest, several Auburn businesses have become oases for the epicurians among us. If you cannot afford to eat at Auburn's few good (although expensive) restaurants, and you shudder at all the burgers, fried chicken, and soggy steamed sandwiches available at the more proletarian establishments, then you can satisfy your culinary desire by staying home and becoming a closet gourmet.

Two businesses have opened up in the past year—Pots, Pans, etc., and Gourmet Mousetrap, and these businesses, along

with Dayspring (an older establishment for natural food nuts) can do a great deal in helping you nurse your habit. Instead of attempting to serve the masses, these establishments want to reach the smaller market of individuals who are concerned about the food they eat and are willing to pay for it. All three of these establishments were started by people who decided to open their own shops instead of driving to Montgomery, Birmingham, or Atlanta for their special needs.

Why Auburn? The loveliest village is more than the quintessential sleepy Southern town. There has been an influx of people with more cosmopolitan tastes, and with the growth of the university,

many professors and students have moved in from various parts of the country. Auburn has also attracted a large population of foreign students with their own eating habits. The new specialty stores saw the potential market in these people, and the specialized needs which even the local supermarkets have only recently begun to fill. A growing interest in better nutrition and a diversity in eating habits has increased the demand for things like pumpkin seeds, bagels and even cous-cous (a North African grain dish). Inflation has driven the cost of dining out so high that it is only a good idea when someone else is paying. Inflation has also sparked consumer interest

STALKING THE

CLOSET GOURMET

By Isaac Joyner



photographs by Rob Lotufo

in investing in high quality cookware that will not need replacing.

So if you are looking for that certain cheese you ate so much of last summer in Clermont-Ferrand, or if you forgot to get your ration of bagels from Browdy's before leaving Birmingham last weekend, or if you just want to impress someone by serving escargot, then you can relax. At the Gourmet Moustrap in Glendale Shopping Center you can buy a full round of brie (a semi-soft cheese), get some frozen Atlanta bagels—and lox (smoked salmon) if you wish, and even pick up some snails with or without the shells. A large portion of their business is in regular and imported beer sales, but they also have the area's best cheese selection and an assortment of Hawaiian coffees, herb teas, and the Famous Amos Chocolate Chip Cookies that rival our locally baked Mr. Mike's cookies for the title of "world's best."

Dayspring, a natural food store, is located on the Opelika Highway across from the Sonic Drive-in. Inside the remodeled old house, with its wide front porch, high ceilings, and bare wooden floors, is a large collection of tin waste cans. Instead of trash, the cans hold bulk quantities of seeds, nuts, whole grains, beans and several types of Granola. All of the items sold in the Dayspring store are low on the food chain, and the owner says that they contain absolutely no chemical preservatives or additives.

Located in the Corner Village Shopping Center is Pots, Pans, etc., a gourmet cooking supply retail store. They feature high quality cookware and specialty equipment, including professional type chef's knives, black metal bread pans, and items both decorative and functional such as terra cotta loaf pans and wine coolers, souffle dishes, aprons, and kitchen witches (a good luck charm from Germany). They have Auburn's best coffee selection, and coffee paraphernalia like drip coffee makers, espresso makers, coffee mills, coffee cups, and demitasse cups. They also sell Mr. Mike's Chocolate Chip Cookies (a local favorite baked at Carmine's Pizza).

And when you have had enough of occidental cuisine, you can take advantage of the oriental food fair that is held

on the last Sunday of every month, from noon to 2 p.m. at the first house on Gay Street past Thach Avenue (two houses up from Hardee's). An oriental food store in Atlanta sends a van down filled with the essential ingredients for oriental cuisine. Besides soy sauce, you can buy hoisin sauce, plum sauce, and even Chinese barbecue sauce, along with var-

ious types of noodles, canned vegetables, and dried foods such as seaweed and squid. If you go, get there at noon because the van leaves as soon as the crowd does. Do not let the crowd intimidate you; just wander around the front porch where the market is held and ask questions.



Checking Out The Chinese Goods

The Greenhouse

By Curt LeVan

The Greenhouse restaurant enjoys an excellent reputation among residents of this area but it has somehow managed to remain unknown to most Auburn students. Located in a beautifully maintained Victorian style house on Ninth Street in Opelika, it is definitely on the "must" list for anyone who truly enjoys dining out.

Reservations are a good idea, as lunch is served six days a week, but dinner is served only on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights. It is also helpful to arrive early, as some dishes are prepared on a daily basis, and I have occasionally been frustrated when they have been out of my first choice (and once my second too).

The menu is limited but the choices are excellent, with things like spinach or crab quiche for lunch, and steak, seafood and crepes for dinner. The main course comes with salad, steamed vegetables, bread, and my favorite—cinnamon and raisin muffins. The waiter brings warm bread halfway through the meal, which is definitely a classy touch. Sometimes at lunchtime there are children who come around and fill the water glasses. The waiters at dinner are very formal, and at times they can be over-

bearing. While service is generally good, our waiter at dinner did get confused as to whether to serve from the right or the left and wielded a rather erratic corkscrew. I have also felt forgotten at times when waiting for the check.

The wine list is surprisingly good for east Alabama, with a variety of domestics (Pinot Chardonnay is my recommendation). The house wine is Ingle-nook.

There are some wonderful desserts, but they do not appear on the menu, so be sure to ask. My favorite is the mocha meringue, a chocolate ice cream with meringue topping.

The best thing about dining at the Greenhouse is the well-maintained atmosphere. Although the tables are a little close, the proliferation of plants, dried flowers, and candles gives it a very warm, comfortable feeling, and the decor is done in excellent taste. It is a fine spot for a leisurely lunch or dinner (an hour and a half to two hours), especially when you're in good company. It is not the place to be if you're in a hurry, as you won't have time to enjoy your surroundings.

With dinners from \$7.95 to \$12.95 it is probably above the average student's weekend budget. Dinner for two with



drawing by Lynne Wells

RESTAURANT REVIEW, con't

wine and the tip will run from \$35 to \$45.

The Greenhouse is elegant, expensive, and for a few hours it helps you to remember what dining out is all about.

little place and you don't have to get dressed up to go there. It's called The Original Andy's Restaurant, which makes me wonder if somewhere in this

world there exists "The Imitation Andy's Restaurant," complete with red vinyl seats and college student looking for a good, low-priced meal.

The Original Andy's Restaurant

Having tired of being beaten by the Chef's Club, I have begun a search for an inexpensive meal which will resemble home cooking. When Andy's Restaurant (located on the Opelika Highway) advertized an every night student special for \$2.95, I gathered by notebook, my ulcer, and my little sister and ventured forth.

I have to admit I had some misgivings when I arrived to find a dirt parking lot complete with a parked Kenworth semi. And once inside, the red vinyl seats and the older gentleman (Andy?) watching the six o'clock news in the dining room made me wonder if I had perhaps made a mistake. After the waitress greeted us with a warning about how she didn't like to come back to a table more than once, I was sure I had slipped up. But being forever the adventurer, I took my chances and ordered. There was some confusion over what was in the advertised special, which was resolved after a conference between the waitress and some unknown force in the kitchen. We were given permission to go to the salad bar.

From there things rapidly improved. The salad bar was adequate and our dinner arrived just as I finished my salad. The country fried steak was as big as my hand and covered with onions, and the baked potato came with plenty of sour cream. I was beginning to have kinder thoughts about Andy. Considering how easy it is to spend about \$3.00 on the tasteless fare at War Eagle Cafeteria, the drive to Andy's can be quite worthwhile. Some of the other items on the menu appeared to be overpriced, but the special was worth the cost. They also have a Sunday buffet for \$2.95, which people say is worth looking into.

Overall, the service was uninspiring but the food made up for it. It's a nice



drawing by Debbie Hartsell



NOLI ME TANGERE!

Coral co-eds fresh from the beach
and glazed in oceans
of expensive coconut lotion
are drenched in pina colata scent.
They incite me to thirst
but not to teach.
Their skin resembles peppermint.

Blistered delicate as citrus crystals
and fragile as Venetian glass,
they shift and wince
all through my freshman English class.

Even soft spaghetti straps
cut their parched flesh
like leather strips.
Even a stare will set them writhing,
and I cannot help but stare.

Raw and translucent,
splendid girls suffer
through my morning lecture.
I temper every insight
with tender testament of ice
and lisp the snowflake
sibilants generously.
I ask each glacial question twice.

Will one precocious Lolita
delirious with her sunburn fever
surface to solicit cure?
I am keeping my eyes
peeled down to the contact lenses.
I will quench her
with compassion and praise
her in imperfect tenses.

Meanwhile, today's lesson is
Snodgrass's "April Inventory."
I dive in with a critical fury:
"The narrator is untrustworthy.
The poem layers like onion or gneiss,
an intricate riddle of satyr's artifice."

In unison, the crimson nymphs
daydream of blizzard
and solar eclipse.
I cannot soothe them:
we must keep our distance,
this strained and dutiful continence.
Deeply, I breathe the scented air.

—R.T. Smith

HURRICANE FREDERIC



OUTLASTING THE ONSLAUGHT

By Rick Burton

...A window is sucked from a downtown building and, as if it is supernaturally suspended, flies down the street.

...Water rushes out of the Mobile Bay and several ships momentarily rest on dry land.

...An empty DC-3 passenger plane rolls from the airport into a major boulevard.

...Trees everywhere crack like glass and bend like elastic over houses.

The reports followed accordingly: "devastating" . . . "terrible" . . . "unreal."

The rampage of hurricane Frederic proved to be a spectacular show. Re-

maining locals and visiting press officials watched as it violently displayed its strength—altering and destroying buildings, ships, and trees. Others returned later to inspect the ruins.

Undeniably, it was an event of catastrophic proportions. But the storm had less evident effects—effects that, when paired with the overwhelming destruction, went nearly unnoticed. Frederic entered the lives of Mobile residents shockingly and aggressively, leaving impressions on the personal level as strong and as lasting as the physical damage

that it left in its trail.

The Circle interviewed a number of Auburn students who were residents of the Mobile area at the time. Their comments and stories indicate that Frederic has indeed had a startling impact on their lives. It taught lessons. It prompted realizations, imprinted memories, and changed the courses of their lives.

On the day of the hurricane, broadcasts and publications made dire predictions. According to the weather bureau, the hurricane would definitely strike Mobile.

"I first heard the news at twelve o'clock that day," said Mobile resident Lyn Ollinger. "They said that the storm would hit in the late afternoon. Officials were afraid that no one would take it seriously, but pretty soon, people were packing up and leaving town."

said, "was the extreme humbling effect. We taped our windows shut and took the rugs off the floor. But we really had no control. All we could do was hope."

"I was tense the whole night, especially since my father was still in Mobile. I stayed awake and listened to the radio

"After the storm, we feasted. There were no freezers to keep food in, so grocers gave steaks away!"

Area residents waited in tense anticipation.

"The general attitude as the storm approached," said JoAnne Babcock, a native of the East Bay town of Dauphin, "was 'well it has happened to everyone else, I suppose it is our turn.'".

JoAnne, like many people, left home for slightly higher ground, even though for her it was only downtown Mobile. Others, like Patrick Gallagher of Fairhope, left the area completely. Patrick described the congested traffic conditions caused by the evacuation, and added, "Worst of all, I was torn. I didn't want to part with the things I had grown accustomed to, but was forced to leave for my safety."

There was certainly a pervading feeling of helplessness. Residents were immediately confronted with the question of what to take and what to pack away. The fact that the severity of the hurricane was still unknown made the decision even more difficult.

I looked through Patrick's photographs of the hurricane damage. One snapshot depicted two of his family's cars covered with limbs.

"You didn't take all of the cars to Montgomery?" I asked.

"No" he shrugged.

"What did you pack?"

"Just enough clothes to spend the night."

Patti Sowell and her family, with the exception of her father, left town to stay with relatives in Brewton, Alabama. Her father remained in Mobile.

"The thing that impressed me," she

through most of the storm."

Citizens had prepared as well as possible for the crisis.

"The people of Mobile were very cooperative," said Paul Rhems, an Auburn co-op student who was working for Alabama Power Company. Paul witnessed the entire storm from the fourth floor of the Mobile Power Company building. "Merchants boarded up their windows and taped the glass, even though it often did not help."

"What was the hurricane like?" I asked him.

"It was exciting really," he replied. "I only slept two hours the whole night. People started losing power at 6:30 and by 8:30, the whole city was out."

"Whenever someone loses power and calls the company, the computer prints it out. So we knew that when the power losses began, the computer would go crazy. I had the job of driving across the bridge to get more print-out paper. Even then, before the storm, winds were up to 60 m.p.h. I was almost blown off the bridge that crosses the bay."

"One man actually was blown off that bridge. City officials rescued him just as the storm was approaching."

"Later, the windspeed got up to 130 m.p.h. The building I was in swayed back and forth most of the night."

"One radio station, WKRP, ran on a generator all night. They had a reporter riding around the city in a station wagon, describing to listeners what he saw. Looking out the windows, I saw him several times, driving around downtown Mobile."

Lyn provided a graphic description of the hurricane. She and her family stayed at home through the storm. "The wind was unbelievable," she said. "It howled so loud that it sounded like a train. We did not know it, but the whole time, our trees were breaking outside."

"We had the windows open and the walls started breathing in and out. I was so scared that I spent the night in my parents' room."

"At about 5:00, when the storm was over, I walked outside. I couldn't believe my eyes. It looked like Vietnam, or at least what I would think Vietnam would look like."

"My neighborhood has always been famous for its trees, but I'm afraid there aren't many trees left standing anymore."

Having to accept the destruction caused by Frederic must certainly have been difficult. One of the most trying times was in the immediate aftermath of the storm, which often entailed a return home.

"On the way home," said Patrick, "there were horror stories on the radio. The broadcasters warned of State Troopers blocking the highway. We went anyway. There was no trouble, no roadblocks. But I was nearly sick with worry for the damage that I expected to see."

Patti commented, "Driving home, I was nearly in tears—I saw all the destruction and wondered what this thing had done to my house."

"My family really had very little trouble," she continued. "We spent two days raking up leaves and branches. We even had electricity and running water the next day. I think that we were very, very lucky."

"Immediately after the storm, everyone considered themselves pretty lucky," said JoAnne. "Everyone I talked to was glad that the destruction and bad luck were not more severe. Fortunately, to more than three people were killed. But when that feeling wore off, people became dissatisfied. They complained about the damages, particularly the fallen trees."

"It was a bad experience," said Mary Crawford, "not the actual storm, but afterward—the realization that the town would never be as pretty again."

Ann Hollander's family, from Mo-

bile, was tremendously affected by Frederic. "My mother wants to move away," she told me. "Our house looks so different without the trees that she says she would rather not live there anymore."

Undoubtedly, Frederic's rampage was discouraging to some. Others, however, like Mike Mayberry of Mobile, were not upset.

"Which of all the events made the deepest impression in your mind?" I asked.

"I would have to say the reactions of people. There was a little looting, but after the shoot-to-kill order, that stopped. (Governor James gave police permission to shoot Mobile looters in order to discourage thefts and break-ins.)

"Most people responded to the trouble with comradeship. Our neighborhood pitched in and cleared the street of fallen trees. None of us spent much time inside. When we weren't working, we congregated outside. Neighbors came over and a group of us would sit on the front porch and talk. I became very close to people who I had not known before the storm."

Patti made a similar comment. "Well, although I had to return to Auburn shortly after Frederic came, my mother told me over the phone that my family and the neighbors had become very close. Since we were one of the few families with electricity then, everyone did their laundry at our house."

If any of Frederic's results can be termed as pleasant, then it must be the sense of unselfishness and comradeship that developed in the days that followed the hurricane. The teamwork involved resulted in new friendships and strengthened existing relationships.

More than any of the interviewees, Patrick considered the week following the storm a learning experience.

"The hurricane threw our part of the county back over 100 years," he opined. "We had running water, but no electricity. The only light came from flashlights and candles."

"I felt we were living like settlers, as we were largely cut off from the rest of the world. Most of the day was spent chopping wood and removing brush. I was truly exhausted by the end of each day."

"When I went home, there were usu-

ally visitors or neighbors there. We'd build a big fire outside and have a barbecue. After supper, there was nothing else to do—we had no lights—so we usually went to sleep."

"The food was great, though. We ate

energy sources that we depend on today. I'm not taking a simplistic-type attitude. Things would dramatically change if we ran out of energy, but the world would go on. I no longer dread the thought of losing current energy sources."

Patrick's comments contrasted with those of other students. I gradually realized that he regarded his experiences positively.

"So you feel you benefited from it?" I asked.

"Well, I certainly didn't enjoy the destruction, but the experience was beneficial in many ways."

Patrick will live with new realizations as a result of Frederic. Others, reacting differently, will move from Mobile. Still others will continue in a lifestyle unchanged by the hurricane. But the hurricane, its preceding events, and its aftermath was a humbling and unforgettable experience in the lives of many Auburn students. And Mobile area residents have had to make an inevitable adjustment as a result. The hurricane is gone, but its results are not, and its impact will lessen but not disappear.

"I couldn't believe my eyes — — — it looked like Vietnam."

vegetables. On the first couple of nights after the storm we feasted. There were no freezers to keep food in, so grocers gave steaks away and neighbors gave away frozen goods rather than having them spoil."

"But most importantly, I learned that we could survive happily without the



LYRICAL REALM OF EXOTIC FANTASY

An inert moon falls
Below the horizon towing
the tide high upon the shore.
Within the entangled jungle
a singular orang utan—
Pongo Pygmaeus—
arises amid last night's
scattered durian shells—
tough spiny husks resembling
a giant chestnut.
A day's progression through
thunderstorms which gather,
moving slow and deliberate across
Sumatran skies.
The aboreal gymnasium
closes for the night,
as the tide yields
to follow sun, moon,
and fauna through
countless urges and resurges
of all the works and days,
and naked women in
Rousseau's Dream.

—Isaac Joyner

coming attractions

not in hell or in haiti either
could i get a moment's piece.
miranda talked and talked
and for a moment i thought
i could read
 by the bright light
of blonde hair around her face.

nothing whispered, nothing chained.
miranda spoke

 and the whole world
glistened. but did not glow.
who can tell when the speaker
has really spoken? miranda says
come hear—i have the evidence.

—A.J. Wright

Link

Breathing smoke of consumed martyrs
Treading tombs of parents past,
We are drops in flowing rivers,
Relay runners to the last.

We are blooms of roots before us,
We, the hopes of all who died;
We are roots of blooms beyond us,
We the future must decide.

Others rest upon our shoulders,
We on others rest besides;
We are players in a concert
Where the human spirit hides.



drawing by Debbie Hartsell



etching by Susan Stein

The Book of Dreams

I am sitting at a table with blank paper. The light swirling in my head. Suddenly there is a slight tremble way below my feet. I know sounds know this sound. A book has wrecked ashore. the gusty wind blows the cover off, and the pages fall out swirling up like flags of light into the darkness. Like a flock of doves they look instantly for a new similar home. They float through an open window of a lighthouse. The lighthouse keeper grows old trying to find some logical order in the pages. Numbers have not been invented yet. Fed up and suddenly guilty in neglecting his duties for so many years, allowing the death of several crews; the old lighthouse keeper throws the paper out the window and goes back to saving ships. Beaming his long light out on the sea.

—Dean Wiseman Golden

Evening

Chairs stand casting shadows on the grass in my house
I smile, for I know that I have no roof
But stars I have embedded in my ceiling
Because I like them

Sitting on the floor,
In the shadow of my bed,
A breeze blows orange leaves through my brain.
I catch one and follow the roadlike veins
That end in dusty sandpits by the wall.

Tomorrow I will set it free
Out the window or down by the stream
But now I am cold
So I just pull the blanket closer,
Prop my head upon a hollow stone and dream
In a tiny, sheltered corner of my room.

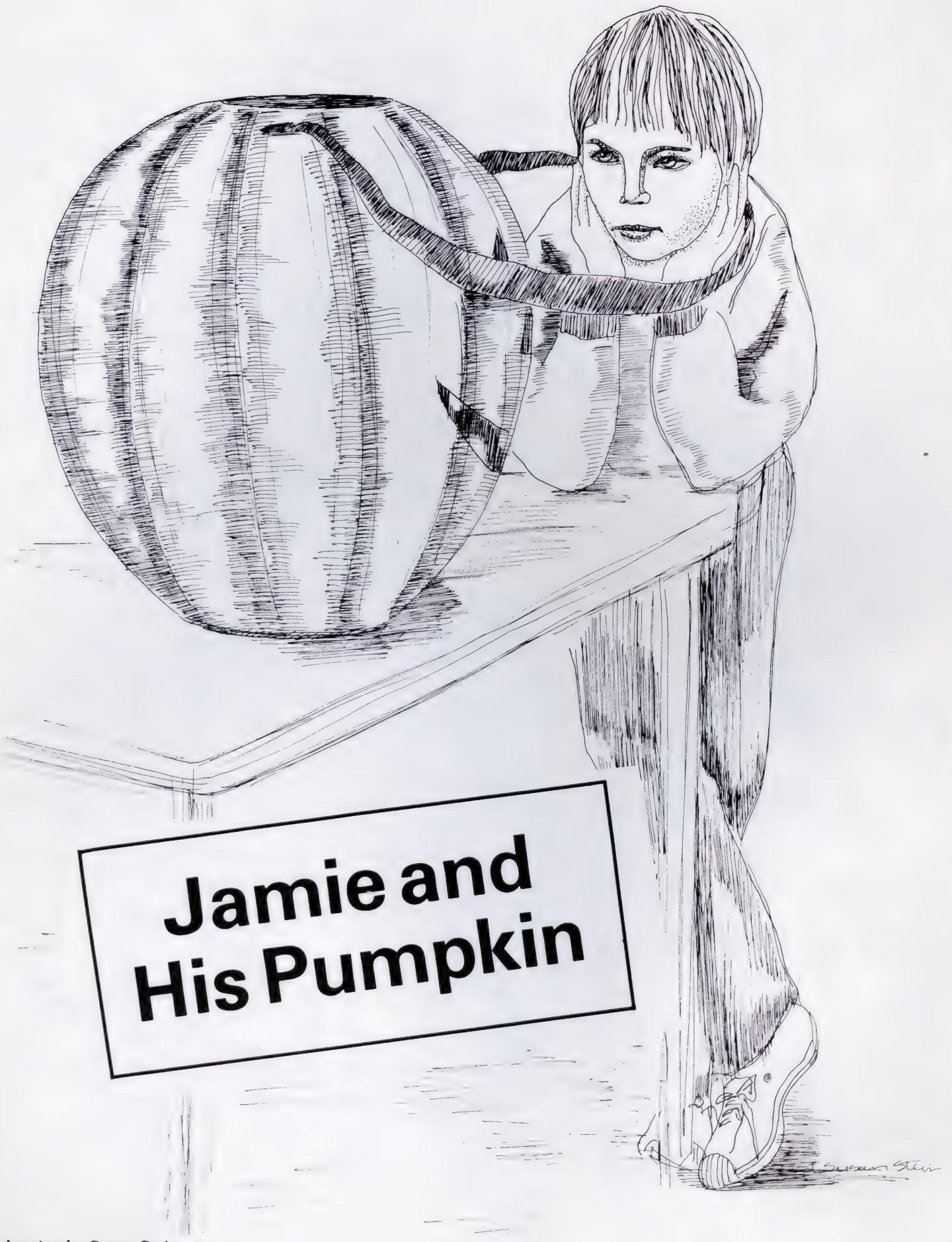
—Lisa Peacock

A Bad Day At The Writing Table

when the poems lie like turtles on their backs

—Dean Wiseman Golden

lithograph by Deborah Allen



drawing by Susan Stein

by Fred Donovan Hill

Neither Bob nor Nancy Dawson had ever seen anything like it. Their older son, Robby, had had his normal problems of growing up, but he had never displayed an *obsession*. Now Jamie, their five year old, was obsessed. Or seemed to be. And with—of all things—a jack-o'-lantern, a plastic pumpkin full of Halloween candy.

It had started the day after Halloween trick-or-treat visits around the little Alabama neighborhood where they had lived for about two years. For the first time Bob and Nancy had taken Jamie along with Robby for the door-to-door excursion. He had been delighted, standing at the door with brown buttons for eyes and an eager smile on his face. His expression, Nancy thought, had been not unlike that of the orange pumpkin head he held out to the neighbors who filled the at first hollow head with Hershey Kisses, Banana Bikes, Kraft Caramels, and some other cheaper candies that Nancy feared would make Jamie quite sick.

It had been Jamie's idea to use a pumpkin head for trick-or-treating. Most of the kids used plain paper bags or slick, manufactured plastic ones with goblins painted on that they had gotten at the five-and-dime. So Jamie's insistence that he take his new pumpkin head along on the visits was, Nancy thought, quite original. But then Jamie had a way about him. He quite often did surprising things. Once Nancy had found him trying to mop his half of the boys' room with a worn-out mop he'd found under the house and some ordinary hand soap. He said the room smelled dusty. Another time he dumped a can of sardines into the tub while his father was bathing. He thought the fish belonged there. But those things had just been amusing. The pumpkin head had become a real problem.

On the day after Halloween when Bob Dawson came home from the university where he taught mechanical engineering, Nancy was cooking a casserole and cleaning the kitchen.

"Hi, honey," Bob said, giving Nancy a quick kiss on the cheek.

"Hi, have a good day?" she asked.

"Oh, all right. Same old slow go. Departmental business. Enjoyed teaching my class this afternoon though."

"That's good."

"Is everything all right?" Bob asked.

"Yes, all right."

The back door flashed open and Robby rushed in with the thudding of his eleven-year-old feet.

"Hi, Dad!" he yelled and jumped up and hugged his father quickly. Then he ran to the living room and threw open the evening paper and started pouring over the comics.

"Where's Jamie?" Bob asked.

"He's in his room," Nancy said.

"Looks like he'd come out and see me a minute at least," Bob said, wiping his sweating face with a paper towel. Nancy didn't answer and so Bob asked, "He isn't sick, is he?"

"No, he's not sick. Not exactly . . . It's just that he's retired to that room today and all day he's been in there with

that pumpkin head full of candy. He's just been sitting in the chair or lying on the bed with that pumpkin beside him or holding it in his hands and talking to it."

"Oh, come on. . . . He's been doing *that all day?*"

"Yes, I'm afraid so."

"He didn't even come for lunch or to play with Robby?"

"No, I carried his lunch in there."

"You shouldn't have. I've told you not to pamper him. He

At the table that night, though, the child sat and stared at his pumpkin as if it contained some inner light within its triangular eyes.

likes it too much."

"I just thought if I went along with this thing he's got about the pumpkin, he would snap out of it before long. I thought fussing at him might make him worse."

"Well, I'm going in there and have a talk with the young man. And maybe I'll give him a few little whacks on the behind."

"No, Bob, don't do that. Promise me you won't."

"All right. I'll talk to him though."

Bob went on into the boys' room even before removing his tie and coat and getting comfortable which he liked to do as soon as he got home. Jamie was sitting in the brown, red, and black chair with Indians and covered wagons running all over it. The pumpkin sat on the chair with its jagged teeth set against Jamie's leg.

"Hello, Jamie," Bob said.

"'Lo," Jamie said, hardly taking his eyes off the pumpkin.

"Your mother tells me you've been in here all day, Jamie. What are you doing in here all day?"

"Jus' talkin' to my pumpkin."

"You're talking to your pumpkin?"

"Yes."

"Does the pumpkin talk back to you?"

"Yes."

"What does it say?"

"Nice things."

"Just nice things?"

"Yes."

"And do you eat the candy, too?"

"The pumpkin giv' me some."

"The pumpkin gives *you* the candy?"

"Sometime."

"But you're not eating too much of it, are you?"

"No. The pumpkin eats most."

"The pumpkin eats most of the candy?"

"Yes. I feed it and it giv' me some."

"Well, I want you to come out and have dinner with your mother and Robby and me as usual. Will you do that for Daddy?"

"Can bring my pumpkin?"

Bob started to say no, then remembered Nancy's attitude towards the matter and said yes. At the table that night, though, the child sat and stared at his pumpkin as if it contained some inner light or luminous secret or ideal world within its triangular eyes.

The next morning Nancy was washing clothes and she could see from the hallway that Jamie was no longer in his room. She did not hear him in the rest of the house either. She did not see him in any of the rooms. She stepped to the back windows and looked out into their fenced-in back yard. She didn't see Jamie there.

"Jamie!" she called as she walked around again from room to room of the house. She got no answer. She went into the yard and called for him.

"He's not out here, Mom," Robby said, coming up behind Nancy.

"Do you know where he is?" she asked the boy.

"He's there . . . under the house." Robby pointed to the small door at the bottom of the wall. It was only about two-and-a-half feet high.

"Jamie's in there?" Nancy asked.

"Yes," Robby said.

Nancy flung open the door to the bottom of the house and looked into the semi-darkness. She saw Jamie sitting in the dirt about six yards from the door. A small shaft of sunlight fell across him and the pumpkin head he cradled on his lap.

"Jamie Dawson, you come out from under there right now," Nancy said.

"No . . . can't," said Jamie.

"Yes, you come on out. I've had enough of this now."

"Go away . . . I jus' want to be alone with my pumpkin . . . Go away."

"Robby," Nancy said to the older boy.

"Yes'm."

"Go under there and bring your brother out."

Robby scrambled through the opening. Jamie tried crawling for the corner, but he kept hugging his pumpkin head full of candy carefully against his chest. He moved too slowly and Robby caught him and drug him out. Jamie stood in the sunlight crying, still clutching the pumpkin to him.

As they all three were standing there in the yard, Nancy decided what she was going to do about Jamie and his pumpkin.

"Robby, go get my car keys off the dresser. We're going to take Jamie for a ride."

"Okay," Robby said, glad they were going somewhere.

Nancy put Jamie and his pumpkin on the front seat of the LTD and then she got into the driver's seat. Robby got into the back.

"Where we goin', Mom?" Robby asked.

"We're going to take your brother away so he can be alone. He doesn't want to be with us anymore. So I'm going to take him out somewhere and let him live with his pumpkin." Nancy looked at Jamie as she talked. His brown eyes were beaming in the sunlight and his small mouth was tight-set and serious-looking. Then Nancy glanced back at Robby. He looked a little puzzled, a little frightened.

From the university town in Alabama they lived in, Nancy drove out onto the highway towards Columbus, Georgia.

"Are we goin' to Columbus, Mom?" Robby asked.

"No, not necessarily. We're just going as far as Jamie wants to go. When we get far enough away from home to suit him we'll let him and his pumpkin out. . . . Does that suit you all right, Jamie?"

"Yes," the child said, still clutching his pumpkin and fondling a piece of candy.

"You can't just leave Jamie, can you, Mom? Not out here somewhere?" Robby asked, looking out the window at the thick woods. Nancy noticed the distressed look on his face in the rear view mirror.

"Well, if that's what Jamie *really wants*, then I'll do it," Nancy said.

"Gosh," Robby said, clutching the back of the front seat.

When they were at least ten miles away from home, Nancy pulled the LTD into a roadside park area and stopped.

"Is this far enough, Jamie?" she asked.

Jamie looked around and then quickly shook his head from side to side. Nancy pulled the car out of the area and drove on.

She turned off onto a farm road. There she saw just asphalt and sun and trees and a house maybe every half mile. She noted on the mileage indicator that she had drive seven more miles. She turned into a little dirt road that ran between thick autumn woods on one side and a long pasture, barren except for a few cows and a calf, on the other. She stopped the car.

"All right, Jamie," Nancy said. "this is far enough. If you still want to leave us, go ahead. Just go on and take your pumpkin and get out. You can be perfectly alone with it here."

Nancy looked at Jamie. She saw him look longingly at the pumpkin. Then he looked out at the deep woods and the large pasture. He reached towards the door panel. But he grasped the window roller in his small hand, not the door handle. Slowly, he rolled down the window. Then he raised up the pumpkin and with both hands pitched it spinning into the ditch beside the dirt road. The candy spilled everywhere.

With just a small smile, Nancy turned the car around and started the drive home.





*etching by Eddie Ross
back cover by Christopher Payne*

